

DECEMBER 1912

PRICE 15 CENTS

THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE



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Edwin Balme
Wallace Irwin
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THE RED BOOK

MAGAZINE

CONTENTS FOR DECEMBER, 1912

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COVER DESIGN	Painted by Henry Hutt	
PHOTOGRAPHIC ART STUDIES	By Moffett Studio, Chicago	
FRONTISPICE	Painted by Hanson Booth	
To accompany "The Flowering Heart"		
A PLUNGE IN BIG BUSINESS	Richard Washburn Child	225
PAYMASTER INVADERS WALL STREET	Illustrated by Fanny Munsell	
THE FLOWERING HEART	Julius Grinnell Furthmann	237
A ROMANCE OF YEDDA STREET	Illustrated by Hanson Booth	
FREE SPEECH	Wallace Irwin	246
A CONVICT'S PLEA FOR "LIFE"	Illustrated by Rea Irvin	
IT IS BETTER TO HAVE LIVED AND LEARNED	Harris Merton Lyon	255
YOU CAN LEARN, EVEN IN NEW YORK	Illustrated by Will Grefe	
THE QUITTER	Edward Lyell Fox	264
A FOOTBALL STORY	Illustrated by Hibberd V. B. Kline	
CALLING IN THE DOCTOR	Owen Oliver	275
A PATIENT WITH "HEART TROUBLE"	Illustrated by Dan Sayre Groesbeck	
THE KEELHAULING OF FAT DAN	Frederick R. Bechdolt	283
A STORY TOLD AT MOTHER MONOHAN'S	Illustrated by W. H. D. Koerner	
DEBTS AND DREAMS	Ida M. Evans	293
A ROMANCE IN MILLINERY		
RED HAIR AND BLACK	Charles Neville Buck	298
A LOVE STORY OF NEW YORK	Illustrated by Eamund Frederick	
AS IT IS WRITTEN	John Barton Oxford	313
ROMANCE VS. REALITY		
SI DUNCAN SELLS THE HOMESTEAD	John Haslette	318
HIGH FINANCE IN SIX BARS	Illustrated by Douglas Dues	
THE LOVER OF LIFE	Edwin Balmer	325
A PROBLEM BROUGHT HOME	Illustrated by W. J. Scott	
MISS JUDITH	Crittenden Marriott	334
A ROMANCE OF THE CIVIL WAR	Illustrated by Douglas Dues	
THE BARONESS' PEARLS	L. J. Beeston	345
AN ADVENTURE OF HON. DEREK TREDGOLD	Illustrated by M. Leone Bracker	
THE HONOR OF THE FAMILY	Minnie Barbour Adams	356
A LITTLE BOY'S TRIUMPH		
THE MAN WHO LOOKED LIKE LINCOLN	Freeman Tilden	361
A RESEMBLANCE FEUD	Illustrated by Herb Roth	
WITH THE SEASON UNDER WAY	Louis V. De Foe	369
REVIEW OF THE NEW PLAYS	Illustrated with Photographs	

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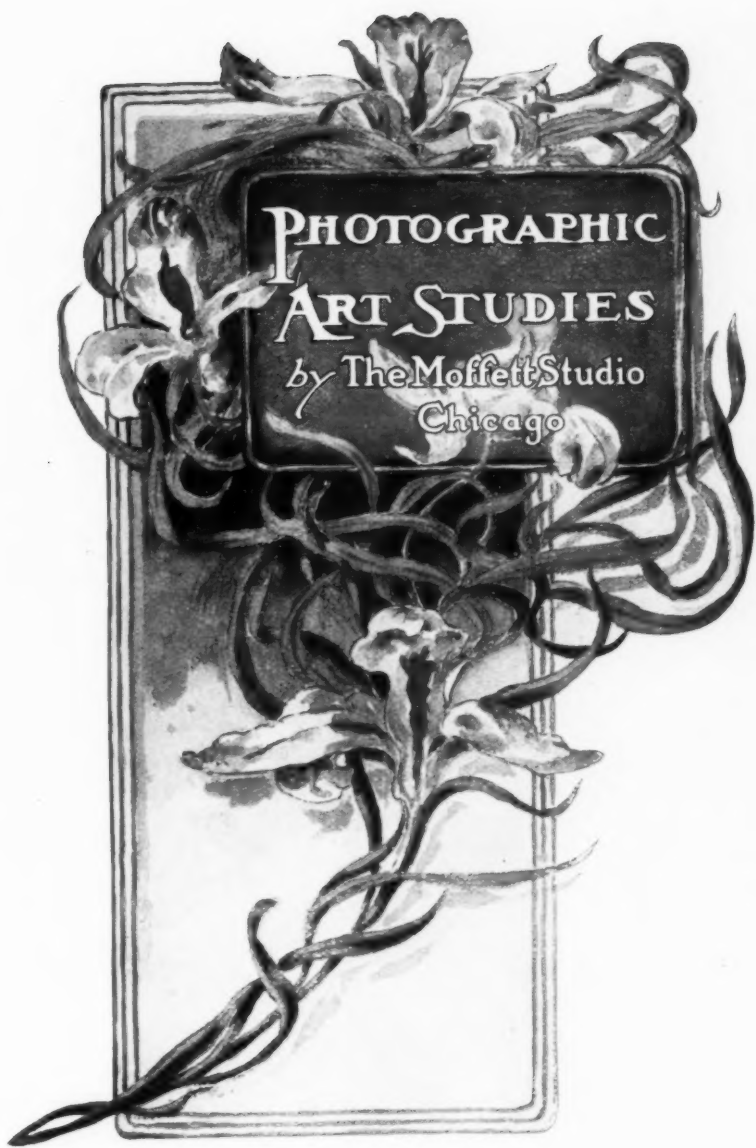
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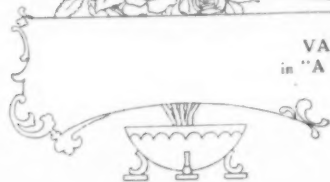
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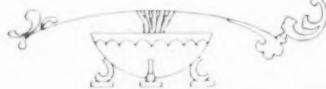
VALLI VALLI
in "A Polish Wedding"





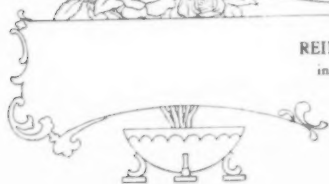
PHOTOGRAPH BY MOFFETT STUDIO, CHICAGO.

INA CLAIRE
in "The Quaker Girl"





REINE DAVIES
in Vaudeville

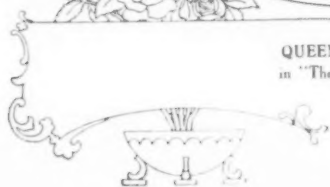




JANE ABERCROMBIE
Grand Opera Prima Donna



QUEENIE VASSAR
in "The Slim Princess"





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CARROLL MCOMAS
in "The Single Man"





MARIE FLYNN
in "The Charity Girl"

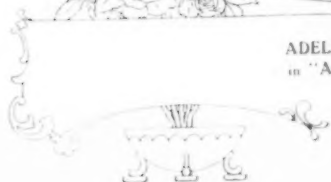


REBA DALE
13 "The Merry Widow Re-Marrried"



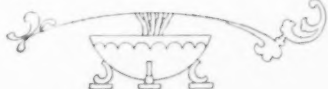


ADELE ROWLAND
in "A Modern Eve"



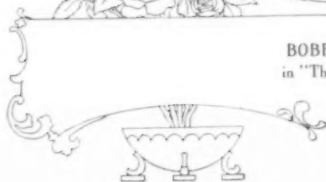


NATALIE ALT
in "The Quaker Girl"





BOBBIE ROBERTS
in "The Charity Girl"





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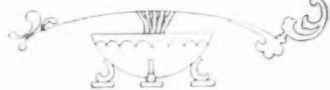
MARTHA DEAN
in "The Charity Girl"



MINNIE MONROE
in "The Charity Girl"

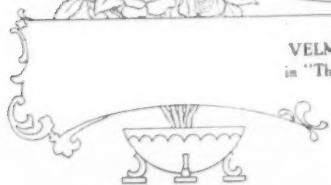


BETTINA FREEMAN
Grand Opera Prima Donna



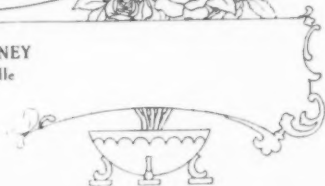


VELMA ROBERTS
in "The Charity Girl"



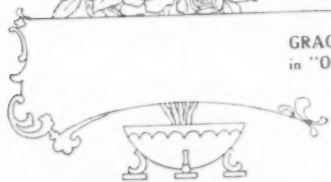


LOIS WHITNEY
in Vaudeville



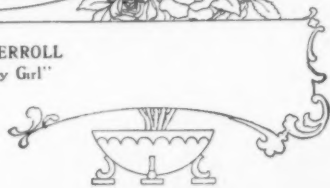


GRACE EDMOND
in "O! O Delphine"



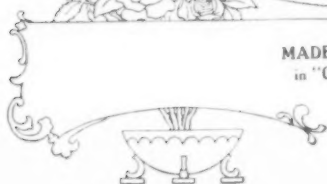


KATHERINE ERROLL
in "The Charity Girl"





MADLINE LOUIS
in "Oliver Twist"





CORA BUCKMAN
Vocal Artist



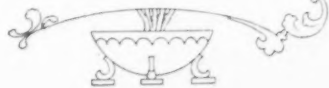
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with "The Only Son" Company



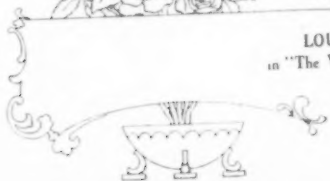


GERTRUDE HOWARD
in "The Winsome Widow"





LOUISE GALE
in "The Whirl of Society"





ANN DAVIS
in "Within the Law"

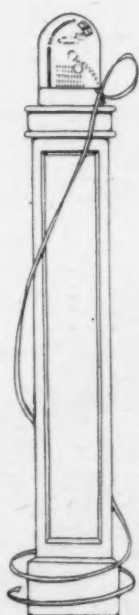




"Do you love him much?" asked the mother in German.

From JULIUS GRINNELL FURTHMANN'S romance of Yedda Street, "THE FLOWERING HEART,"
page 237

Vol. XX Nº 2	THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE	December 1912
RAY LONG, Editor		

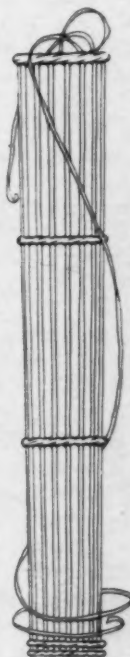


A Plunge in Big Business

by RICHARD
WASHBURN
CHILD

Author of "Jim Hands," "He Who Laughs Last," etc.

Illustrated by
FANNY MUNSELL



PAYMASTER had been able to escape arrest by the police inspectors of Eastern cities owing to the fact that he was more of an adventurer with other people's money than a specialist in any one form of that mischief which civilization calls crime; but were it necessary to name this young man's profession in a word, the word would have to be "thief."

Nevertheless this sharp-eyed, alert, sinewy, muscular young man, who had earned his name by betting on the famous surprise of the racing world—the bay gelding Paymaster from the Donegan stables—was something more than a thief. He was a good-natured soldier enlisted in the little, diminishing army which still invades human interest

with a smile, storms the heights of novelty with a glad shout, and plants the flag of chance on the ramparts of the Close Squeak.

Necessity might drive Paymaster to pick a pocket on Broadway; choice would lead him to sell a paste diamond to a Rajah of India. When satiety of second story work bored him, he dreamed of the glory of abducting the beautiful daughter of the King of Patagonia, assuming for the moment that she existed, and was beautiful. He was not professional. To be professional is to be serious. Paymaster took his ups and downs, his good luck and his bad luck, even his own persistent vanity, with the light-heartedness of an oriole in an orchard. The world was one long, joyful game.

He was smoking a cigarette on a particular twenty-fifth of June which he will not soon forget. The day was piping with the heat; heat rose in waves from the pavements on Seventh Avenue. Drivers of trucks doused their horses' heads with dippers of water, and the beet greens of the sidewalk grocery fell over the edges of the boxes, weary with the sullen, sordid warmth of New York.

Paymaster sat at a table behind a screen of greenery which made an outdoor inclosure for the thirsty, and sitting there dabbed one forefinger in a little wet pool on the table top and was glad to be back again in New York. He even watched his own digit as it moved here and there just as if it were not in fact his own. Suddenly indeed, there appeared in the circle of his vision another finger moving over the table top, which he might have thought belonged to him had it not been so yellow and thin and so stained with chemicals. Paymaster looked up quickly, and in a glance of his practiced, observing, analytical and cataloguing eye saw that the individual who had seated himself across the table was a pale, worried, threadbare, frayed-cuffed person, wearing a button of some fraternal order in his lapel and a straw hat, grimy and spotted with machine lubricant. As Paymaster was about to lower his eyes the other pulled from his coat pocket a lump of some black substance. He threw it upon the table top and it bounced about with great resiliency before it settled down.

"Well, what do you think of that?" said the stranger in a dull, ironical voice. Paymaster picked up the lump, examined it, smelled it, pinched it between his thumbs and forefinger.

"I think it's fine," he said impudently. "What is it?"

"It's an invention," said the serious stranger.

"I don't call a hunk of rubber any invention," sneered Paymaster, rolling it away from him.

"It's not rubber; it's composition. It's been my life for three years. It's a substitute for rubber made out of fish scales and soft coal."

"Do you want to sell it?" asked Paymaster suspiciously.

The sad, labor-bleached young man shook his head and cackled.

"No, I'm done. I've just made up my mind this noon the invention is no good, and I haven't got the conscience to sell it. I'm going back home to Fosbank, Ohio, where I came from, and marry a certain rich widow old enough to be my mother's first cousin."

"I've got a conscience much huskier than yours," answered the rascal. "I didn't know there was any rich widows left, but I'll match you to see whether I take the rubber or the woman."

The other looked up at the burning sky as if debating the question for the last time; then he pounded on the table with his chemically yellow fist, to express a final decision.

"What's the use?" he asked, addressing himself to fate. He drew a coin from his pocket, slapped it down on the back of one hand and then looked at it. "You win!" he said with the voice of a cheerful loser.

"Win?" asked Paymaster. "You say I win!"

The other took a bunch of papers from his coat and a tagged key from his pocket, placed them on the table and shoved them toward the adventurer.

"If I were dishonest enough and wanted to bring shame to the name of Stobbs," said the stranger, "I would take these patents and specifications and this key to my laboratory and I would find the most respectable financier in the city—some man who is a trustee of hospitals and the Simple Simon Welfare Home—one who wears white side whiskers, and I would sell him this process for about twenty thousand dollars, without explaining that it costs more to manufacture a pound of this substitute than it costs to buy four pounds of the real stuff."

"I don't understand yet who won the toss," said Paymaster.

"You did," said Stobbs. "I've got to take the widow. Do you get me?"

"I get you," said Paymaster sourly, picking up the key and the papers and the sample.

The stranger yawned.

"There's another trouble with the invention," said he. "When it's exposed

to the air or to water for a few days it disintegrates. It crumbles. I merely mention this so that you can prepare to make new samples from time to time."

Paymaster nodded. The other man yawned again, consulted a dollar watch and arose.

"She owns a motor car," he said with a sigh. "I guess I'll go up to the Pennsylvania now and get a ticket. Then I'll buy a new straw hat and tidy up a bit and then— It's hot, isn't it?"

"So I see by the morning papers," Paymaster answered.

"Good-by," said Stobbs. "You'll find the patents, *et cetera*, all assigned in blank. We sha'n't ever see each other



"I don't understand yet who won the toss," said Paymaster. "You did," said Stobbs. "I've got to take the widow."

again. I hope you make some money. Good-by, Mister—"

"Dobbs," said Paymaster, with a grin.

The other hesitated before plunging out into the blaze of sunlight and heat.

"She's not so bad looking," he said, as if to himself. "She lost a forefinger in a meat-chopper years ago. But that was before she was in Society. It's hot, eh? Well—good-by."

He had gone.

"Do youse pay for your friend's drinks, too?" asked the waiter a little later.

Paymaster blinked, but dug into his pockets almost cheerfully. His eyes were fixed upon the address written on the tag: "Loft, 122 West Perry Avenue, Hoboken."

"Maybe it's true and maybe there's somethin' in the plan after all," he said to himself, pinching the sample of rubber. "I'll do what he said: I'll sell the process to some old guy with white side whiskers."

Three hours later Paymaster was in the little Hoboken laboratory of Stobbs from Fosbank, Ohio, dipping pieces of cotton duck into a glutinous mixture, drying them over a hot sheet of tin, according to directions, and then testing their waterproof qualities with a grin of triumph.

At last he looked out of the narrow window and down at the children playing in the gutter.

"I guess there's some queer things left in the world after all," he whispered, staring at the pink sunset with half-closed eyes. "I'll call it the Imperial Rubber-right-O Manufacturing Corporation. Some name like that. And now to find a financier!"

Paymaster's ideas of great bankers and business men were drawn principally from illustrated advertisements of correspondence schools. In his fancy there grew a conventionalized picture of a sleek, respectable, well-fed, well-bathed man of sixty in a white wainscoat, with a firm mouth and well-brushed white hair and nicely combed side whiskers and a tall hat resting on a mahogany desk beside him. It almost hurt the adventurer's conscience to plan to defraud such a sterling character and impose

upon one who after death would be described by the newspapers as "a man well known for his probity, his public spirit and his great importance in the world of finance and philanthropy."

None the less he realized that he was now after big game, and, shutting his thin lips and narrowing his shrewd eyes, he began to rehearse the presentation of his plans. "I have a proposition that deserves the attention of Big Business," were the opening words upon which after some days of delay and debate, he finally set his heart.

The delay was accounted for by an unfortunate circumstance: Paymaster had no acquaintance with financiers. Those whose names appeared in the papers did not meet the description required. One lacked the age, another the respectability, a third the interest in philanthropy, and a fourth the white side whiskers; none would do. Much troubled, he went finally to the Public Library and blindly searched the business directory for light, which it contained not. He then looked up "Bankers" in the card catalogue, then "Riches," and then other titles without result.

At last luck favored him. He found a volume entitled "Five Hundred and Twenty Great New Yorkers," and was impressed by it in direct ratio to his ignorance of the fact that the volume contained the "life sketches" of five hundred men who had been willing to pay fifty dollars apiece to appear in the list.

Opposite page 321 was a steel engraving of Mr. Edward Matello Worthington. At the sight, Paymaster caught his breath. The text described Mr. Worthington as "a man well known for his probity, his public spirit, and his great importance in the world of finance and philanthropy, a director in many industrial and public service companies, prominent in church affairs, and the father of the well and favorably known Geraldine Hannah Worthington, an accomplished importer of Pomeranians." The picture was of a timid, benevolent man in a white waistcoat, with gray hair and side whiskers—a portrait of the law-abiding type before which even so blithe a thief as Paymaster must have at least one gasp of awe.

"The very mark!" exclaimed the adventurer, recovering from the gasp and shutting the huge tome with a slam. "I'll trim him and I'll trim him good. I'll leave his judgment lookin' like an empty sardine box at low tide!"

Such words are easily said; it is another matter to sell a patented process for making a substitute of rubber to a captain of affairs like Mr. E. Matello Worthington. Indeed, certain delays, obstacles, impediments, and reversals were in the way of even so much as seeing the great respectability, to say nothing of reaching his august ear.

Paymaster, having dressed in a new suit of clothes and a black, respectable silk tie, first tried calling at Worthington's office. A red-haired young man with dull, fishy eyes out of which he looked alternately as if he could not spare his whole attention at one time, met the bogus inventor. He offered a pencil, stained red in keeping with the mahogany wood-trim and furniture. He offered also a pad of paper.

"Your name, and a short statement of your business, please," said he.

"Harold Dobbs," wrote Paymaster, believing his first thought of an alias was as good as any, "wants to offer a valuable process for manufacturing a substitute for rubber."

Having read this ingenious message, the fishy eyed one closed his fishy eyes; a bystander would have said that exhaustion finally had overcome him. He retired behind a ground-glass door, looked down the harbor toward the Statue of Liberty, yawned, caught a fly that bobbed vainly against the plate-glass window pane, destroyed its interior mechanism by the gentle pressure of a thumb and forefinger, and returned to the outer office.

"Mr. Worthington regrets that he cannot see you," he said, petting the sides of an inverted spring water carboy with the palms of his hands.

Paymaster's heart sank; his high spirits seemed to come up with a dull thud against some obstruction in the vicinity of his liver.

"He couldn't see you anyway," said the clerk, leering at the adventurer. "Just now he is very busy in conference."

Almost as these impressive words fell from his mouth a door opened, disclosing the great man himself engaged in the important task of trying to balance an *art nouveau* paper-cutter on his thumb.

"Good-by," said Paymaster, opening the door into the corridor and speaking to the clerk. "You're wasting your time here, old man. You ought to be running a wire-tapping parlor!"

"I'll bet if the old man knew he was such a liar, he'd fire him," he went on, talking to himself.

As his anger cooled, however, under the soothing influence of a cigarette, new plans came into his resourceful head. It was nearly lunch time. Paymaster knew that the fishy eyed clerk would soon go out. He wasn't wrong. He had the pleasure of seeing his enemy among those who poured out the door of the great office building.

"I guess I see light," he mused. "My mistake was wanting to take money away. The big play with these fellows is being ready to put it in. Now then, if I only knew—"

After a moment's consideration, he went to the telephone booths and hunted in the directory among the W's before he called a number.

"Is Miss Geraldine Worthington in?" he asked of the instrument.

"Who wishes to speak to her?"

"A society reporter," said Paymaster, winking at his reflection in the glass door.

"Hold the line please."

"They all fall for it," he whispered into his second fist, as if imparting a confidence.

"Yes?" came a new sweet voice after a minute.

"Your father is a trustee of the Children's Hospital, isn't he?" asked the adventurer.

"No; but he's on the board of managers of the Old Ladies' Home," replied Geraldine promptly.

"Would he take a contribution for it?"

"Of course."

Paymaster closed the connection.

"Of course," he repeated ironically. "Of course, and then some of courses. Papa would not refuse; he would accept the money. I was a pin-head not to think of this at first."

Again he went up in the elevator; again he leaned over the mahogany rail.

"Mr. Worthington in?"

This time a girl arose and pulled up both her sleeves to show her arms.

"I never saw better," said Paymaster.

"Umph," snapped the girl, very well pleased. "Write *your* name and *nature* of *your* business on this pad."

Paymaster wrote. "Harold Dobbs. I want to make a contribution."

With this message the girl disappeared, pulling down her sleeves; without it she returned, pulling them up again.

"I never saw better," repeated Paymaster.

"Aint you awful!" exclaimed the young woman. "Everybody with money is so fresh these days! I don't care if I do say it. And Mr. Worthington wants you to come *right* in!"

Paymaster passed into the presence.

"Mr. Dobbs! Mr. *Harold* Dobbs!" cried Worthington, stalking forward. "I am delighted to see you. A contribution—I presume it is the Old Ladies' Home?—or—?"

Paymaster blushed. He felt the shame of unworthiness. He found it necessary to think of twenty thousand dollars in order to pull himself together. The thought refreshed him.

"You're right," said he, taking the proffered chair. "I admit it, Mr. Worthington. It was the Old Ladies' Home. It appeals to me. Of course, we can't use it—you and I in our old age, but I want to contribute two or three thousand dollars."

"Well," said the financier resting one set of finger tips against the other.

"I can't," said Paymaster, dropping his voice.

The smile disappeared from the benevolent face. Worthington viciously plucked a single white hair from his wealth of whiskers.

"I can't," repeated Paymaster bravely, "until I find a way to promote my process. I thought you—"

"You are an inventor!" roared the capitalist as if accusing his new acquaintance of murder.

Paymaster suddenly remembered his opening phrase.

"I have a proposition that deserves the attention of Big Business," he exclaimed, tumbling out his words. "Here, Mr. Worthington, is a sample of my substitute for rubber. Here are pieces of common cotton cloth made absolutely waterproof by treating it with my stuff. It's called Rubber-right-O. Here are the documents, Mr. Worthington, and specifications. It's worth millions, Mr. Worthington."

"And what do you want for it?" sneered the financier, touching the resilient lump gingerly.

"Twenty thousand," said Paymaster, wiping his forehead with his sleeve.

Mr. Worthington laughed in a fatherly way.

"My boy," said he, "you will learn that successful men, like myself, never undertake any wild-cat schemes of this sort. No! we are satisfied with conservative methods. We seek no large profits. Investors depend upon us and we must only interest ourselves in things tried and true. You have probably heard some of this wicked talk against financiers—about their enormous profits. My boy, the financier is only a middleman between industry and thousands of investors, taking his little honorarium here and there—as he can get it, in these distressing times of agitators, muck-rakers, and demagogues."

"I don't believe I get you," said the bewildered rascal. "What is the process worth to you? Make an offer, Mr. Worthington!"

The old pillar of society narrowed his eyelids, arose, paced up and down a moment, stopped, examined the lump of sample and the pieces of waterproof cloth, read one or two pages of the patent entries, then suddenly whistled. It was a soft whistle, indicating an idea.

"Well," said he, "just to help you out I'll give you one hundred dollars."

Paymaster—be it said to the credit of his wit—laughed.

"Wont take it?" said the financier.

The thief shook his head.

"Would you take twenty thousand dollars?"

"Now?"

"Yes, as soon as we can get it printed."

"Get what printed?"



"For what?"

"For nothing," said Worthington. "You don't expect me to pay for it, do you? I shall incorporate the—what do you call it?—the Rubberright-O Company. But that name is no good, my boy.

We will call it the United and Export Corporation. Yes, I begin to think better of your invention. It has a wide appeal. Can we get plenty of these samples?"

"Sure!" answered Paymaster, and clapped his hand over his mouth because he saw that Mr.

Fanny M. M. M.

"Aint you awful!" exclaimed the young woman.

"Everybody with money is so fresh these days!"

"Why, the stock of the corporation," said Worthington, fumbling in a drawer. "Here, Dobbs, have a good cigar. Maybe we can work out something after all."

Paymaster's eyes shone.

"To begin with," said the old man, "you sell me half your interest in the process."

Worthington again was engaged in the awe-inspiring process of thinking.

"Now we've got the first corporation formed and its assets are these papers and your laboratory and samples of product; there is one hundred thousand dollars of capital stock. Next we form the United and Export Corporation."

"You said that before," Paymaster whispered timidly.

"Nonsense!" cried the financier. "This is not United and Export Corporation. This is *The* United and Export Corporation—a wholly different concern, and the first corporation contracts with the second to sell the second all its assets for one hundred thousand dollars, and the first corporation takes payment in stock of *The* United and Export Corporation, and the balance of the stock left in the treasury will be sold to raise working capital. Do you follow me?"

"Yes," said Paymaster, lying as glibly as his throbbing head would permit.

"You have no objection to my acting as promoter of the second corporation, have you? I am scrupulously careful in these matters and the stock I take for my services must only represent the fair promoter's profit, say, twenty thousand."

"Go on," said the adventurer admiringly. "Do what you please."

Worthington came and looked down steadily into the thief's blinking eyes.

"You are a big, broad-gauged man!" he said in a solemn bass. "I like to do business with you and I will make you rich. There is one other matter—perhaps we will want to vote to obtain an underwriter for the sale of the securities. You have no objection to E. M. Worthington & Co., Bankers, acting in that capacity. Of course, I will immediately sub-underwrite. I have several gentlemen who will act without my firm appearing at all."

"Go as far as you like, Mr. Worthington," exclaimed Paymaster. "Only tell me this—what do I get?"

"You! What do *you* get? Bless my heart!" roared the financier. "You get fifty thousand dollars worth of stock at par. That's what you get!"

"Great Scott!" cried Paymaster. "You don't mean I get *that*!"

"Haven't you been listening? Come, come, we have enough to do! I will call up my lawyer now. A week from to-day you will come to the director's meeting at two o'clock. Here is your hat. A week from to-day."

Paymaster, with his head buzzing with whirlwinds of emotion, found himself a few minutes later wandering aimlessly through the busy street.

"I've heard that it paid to be honest and straight," said he, "but this is the first time I ever really saw it happen. I only hope the old man don't change his mind."

Paymaster's fears were wasted. Mr. Worthington was surrounded by six frightened young clerks when the adventurer arrived to keep his appointment.

"Mr. Dobbs," said the representative of Big Business, "these are the stockholders of the United and Export Corporation, also of *The* United and Export Corporation. We now proceed to elect boards of directors. I propose the following named. It is a vote. We now hold a meeting of *The* United and Export Company to elect directors. It is a vote. Moved to adjourn. It is a vote. Meeting of United and Export Corporation moved to sell assets. Carried unanimously. Finney, write that down in the minutes; you're the secretary. You're the president, Mr. Dobbs."

"President!" gasped Paymaster.

Mr. Worthington took a pocket comb from his white waistcoat and smoothed out his white whiskers.

"Meeting called to order of *The* United and Export Corporation," he went on with his eyes closed. "Moved and seconded to buy assets of United and Export Corporation. Those of a contrary mind? It is a vote. Moved and seconded to apply twenty thousand services of Edward Matello Worthington in promotion. It is a vote. Moved to adjourn. Put that down, Finney. All right, boys; that's all. Hold on; bring in those bundles from the hall!"

Paymaster watched the procession of bundles being deposited in the corner.

"Will you please tell me where the money to carry this on is coming from?" he asked.

Worthington laughed.

"From the sale of stock," said he. "I have obtained the services of Bernstein and Mahoney, brokers, of Chicago, Illinois, to handle that. Incorporation has been passed on by Moss, Rose and Thorne, attorneys."

"And what are those bundles?" the rascal inquired.

"Engraved certificates from the World Engraving Note Company."

"I'm much obliged," gasped Paymaster.

"Then sign these papers—these patents, this assignment. There! Now here is your certificate for five hundred shares, par \$100, in the United and Export Corporation. Indorse your name on the back. Good! Now give it back to me and take this certificate for fifty thousand shares fully paid and non-assessable, par one dollar, in *The United and Export Corporation*."

"Is that piece of paper worth fifty thousand dollars?" asked Paymaster, trembling as he rose from his chair.

Mr. Worthington for answer shrugged his shoulders and slapped the thief on the back in a most affectionate way.

As Paymaster went out toward the door he shook his head from side to side.

"I don't see yet where all the money came from?"

"Well, drop in next Wednesday," said the financier. "I'll let you know what Bernstein's campaign has accomplished in placing the stock through the country districts of Ohio and Illinois. And by the way, don't forget to ship a box of samples of our product. The subscription men must be provided with them."

"I need ten dollars to buy fish scales," stammered the adventurer. "Could you let—"

"No," snapped Worthington. "Don't bother me with details; you advance it and charge it to the corporation. Good-by, Dobbs. Come Wednesday."

Paymaster fretted all the week because he could not turn his precious stock certificate into money. Worthington had warned him not to attempt a sale. Bright and early Wednesday morning, therefore, Paymaster was at the office.

"How's it going?" said he.

"What?" asked Worthington.

"United and Export."

"Oh, fine," said the old man. "It's selling for thirty cents a share. Bernstein is advertising it to go to forty to-morrow. I resigned from the board of directors yesterday. Finney, go out and call in the boys. There! All you directors, including you, Dobbs, sign these waivers of notice. We're going to have a meeting. Moved and seconded that resignation is accepted. It is a vote. Moved and

seconded that office of the United and Export Corporation be located at the laboratory of the company, 122 West Perry Avenue, Hoboken. I had the books of the company sent there. It is a vote."

"Telegram for you, sir," said the fishy eyed secretary from the door.

It proved to be from Bernstein.

"He says fifty cents a share next week," answered Worthington.

The poor clerks felt in their pockets to see if they had any money to invest. Paymaster took another cigar.

"Big advertising campaign," said Worthington. "You knew, Dobbs, that Bernstein bought out my bid for the financing. So I'm out of it now. Too bad!"

"It is too bad," said Paymaster sympathetically. "But never mind, Mr. Worthington; we've got our stock."

"Move to adjourn—some one of you boys," said the financier briskly. "Put that motion, Dobbs—you're president."

"That's so, I forgot," said Paymaster.

"What do I say?— It is a vote."

"Come around three weeks from to-day," Worthington whispered to him.

Paymaster did as he was bid.

It was a day of dismal midsummer rain. From the high office windows one could no longer see the Statue of Liberty holding a torch to the sky—even the harbor was an indistinct hole filled with a muddy brown and gray haze. The rain beat on the windows. The air within was still and close. The wind outside mourned dolefully. Paymaster began to sense impending misfortune.

At last the ground-glass door opened.

"Oh it's you, Dobbs," said the financier to the thief.

"Yes, sir. What's the price now? You know you told me to make no inquiries and I couldn't even get you on the telephone. How's it going?"

Worthington put on a pair of black-rimmed spectacles, as if to inspect Paymaster for the first time.

"Poor Bernstein," said he at last. "He went too far in his advertising. I'm glad now that I had nothing to do with the corporation. We believers in the conservative methods—"

"What happened?"

"The Federal officers. They found our

rubber wasn't any good; then a fraud order. Haven't you been to your laboratory these last three days?"

Paymaster shook his head.

"They were there, too, I hear. It's lucky that you and I sold our stock when we did."

"Lucky *we* sold!" Paymaster roared as if in physical pain. "You told me *not* to sell."

Worthington plucked another single white hair from his cheek. He examined it. He weighed it in the palm of his white hand. He let it fall toward the floor and kicked it as it fell.

"Well, to be frank with you, Dobbs, in a case like this it is devil take the hindmost. I should not have wanted to appear on the books when trouble came, anyway. You can understand that."

"And you made thirty thousand dollars!" cried the adventurer. "Well, what's my stock worth now?"

"I'll tell you about that," the financier answered with his old benevolent beam. "I had not said anything about it before, but fortunately the stock was issued in blank. Your name—the good, unsmirched name of Dobbs, is not on its face. Why don't you give that certificate to the elevator boy when you go down? Or shove it under the plush seat of a surface car when the conductor isn't looking?"

The thief scowled as he rolled a cigarette between his thumb and forefinger. Worthington drummed impatiently on the glass desk top with his well-manicured old finger nails.

"I spent some money on making samples—on fish scales and telegraph and express charges," said Paymaster. "What are we going to do about that?"

"We?" said the financier coldly. "Why we? If I had a claim against *The United and Export Corporation*, I think I'd enter it on *my* books against experience. You must not forget, Dobbs, that I said in the first place it was a wild-cat scheme. But I took your word for it and nearly became mixed up in a business which was neither meritorious or conservative. I stand for sound, sane methods. It is just such schemes as yours that give our American reputation a black eye. It gives the agitators a chance to talk. My position is too well known in

these matters to permit of discussion. I don't wish to have anything to do with such matters, and, young man, here are your patents and other papers. Take 'em away."

Paymaster smiled sourly.

"The Old Ladies' Home will have to go without my contribution," said he. "All my profits in this are tainted money. Do you get me?"

"I usually avoid slang," said the old man, "but this time I get you."

Paymaster turned about at the door.

"I guess I'll go back to my old business."

"Your old business?"

"Yes—takin' other people's money from 'em," said Paymaster. "I never was cut out for a financier. The corporation business gets me all mixed up. I never had the training to be a pillar of society. Probity aint my middle name. Big Business wont ever miss me. My methods is rough. Good-by."

"Good-by, my boy," said Worthington.

Two hours later, having nursed his disappointment into feverish desire to do something without any clear idea of what he should do, Paymaster returned.

The fishy eyed clerk met him.

"I want to see Mr. Worthington," said the adventurer.

The clerk looked at the ceiling and thrust a pad of paper and a pencil toward the visitor.

"Kindly write your name and the nature of your business," he intoned.

"Why, you know me!" cried the unfortunate thief. "I am president of *The United and Export Corporation*."

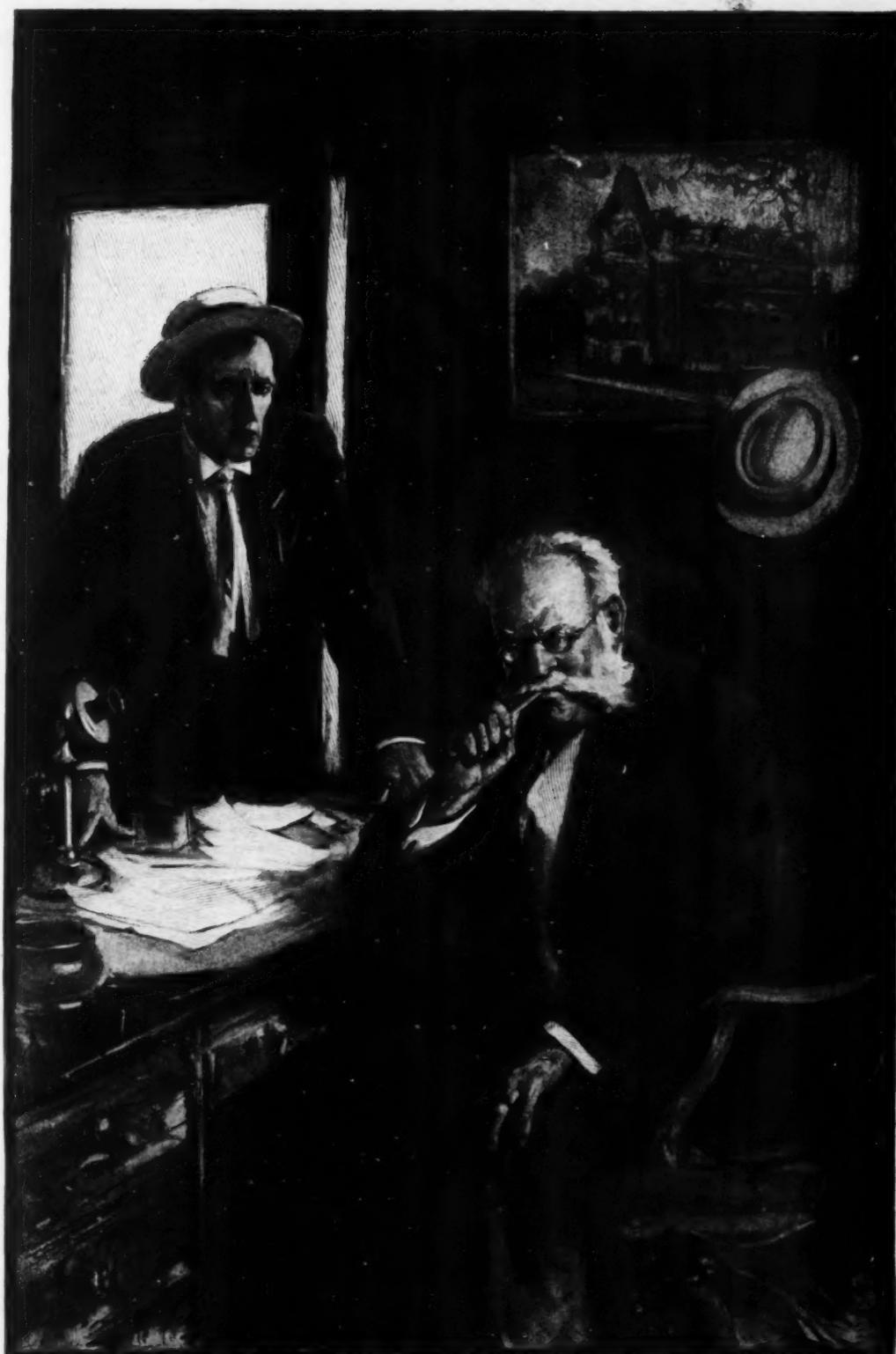
The other looked at him first with one eye, then with the other, as if he were unwilling to devote more than one-half of his attention to him at one time.

"Just write it on the pad," said he.

Paymaster wrote.

The fishy eyed one went into a vacant room, examined his finger nails, looked on the window pane for a fly, and, failing to find one, traced the course of a fat rain drop down the glass. Then he returned.

"Mr. Worthington is in conference," said he sadly. "He remembers you vaguely. He wishes me to say that he



"It is lucky that you and I sold our stock when we did," said the financier.

does not approve of any proposals you may offer."

"Is that all?" gasped Paymaster.

The other petted the glass carboy of spring water with the palms of his hands.

"That's all," said he, "except I can tell you something, Mr.— Mr.—"

"Dobbs," said the thief.

"In confidence, as it were," whispered the clerk.

"Yes."

"Well, Bernstein writes us—confidentially, of course—that some woman in Ohio who bought several thousand shares of stock without consulting her husband, doesn't dare to face him with the loss of all her money. She's coming to New York looking for trouble. It will end up with lawyers and a fuss for those still connected with the company."

"What of it?" said Paymaster.

"Nothing, except if I was president of *The United and Export Corporation*, I think I'd leave town."

"Perhaps you are right," the adventurer whispered. "But can't I resign?"

"Too late," said the clerk mournfully.

"There isn't anybody left to accept it."

Paymaster sighed. He said no more. On the way to the elevator he buttoned up his rain-coat. In the marble hall below he stopped suddenly. He had always prided himself on being surprised at nothing. Now, however, he was aghast at a horror of coincidence which startled his vision. A woman was tracing her way down the white-on-black alphabetical list of firm names and occupants of the offices in the building. She had already reached the W's. At Worthington her right forefinger stopped. And her right forefinger was missing.

Paymaster could remember the exact words of the inventor of Rubber-right-O: "She lost a forefinger in a meat chopper years ago. But that was before she was in Society. For a rich widow, she's not so bad looking."

The thief hesitated a moment, observing her rich and faulty attire, her pugnacious jaw, the fighting tilt of her head.

"Oh, if it turned out to be true!" he whispered to himself. "If it was only really so!"

"Ma'am, can I help you?" said he, lifting his hat. "I see you're from Ohio. I see you lost your finger in a meat-chopper. I see you are a large stockholder in *The United and Export Corporation*. Your name, please."

The woman's eyes opened wider and wider. She sputtered.

"I don't know who you be, young man," she said, grasping her umbrella tighter. "You may be a detective for all I know, and I aint afraid of my name neither. It's Stobbs—Mrs. Alexander Hamilton Stobbs of Fosbank, Ohio. And there is some people right here in New York who mayn't know me well now, but they will before I'm through with 'em."

"Ma'am," said Paymaster, almost affectionately, "you and me is actors in '*The Great American Comedy*,' ma'am. It's some show."

He drew the papers which Worthington had returned to him from his pocket. On top of them he laid a key tagged "122 West Perry Avenue, Hoboken."

"Give these to your husband, ma'am," said he, "—that is, when you tell him how you invested your money, ma'am. He'll understand. You'll probably notice a lot of understanding coming over him when he sees 'em."

"And tell him, ma'am," Paymaster went on addressing the astonished woman, "that he owes me a drink. I paid for the last, beggin' your pardon, ma'am. Tell him I tried hard to be a 'pillar of society,' ma'am, but it goes too hard against my conscience. Tell him I'm going back to second-story work. Tell him I've found I haven't got the heart to be a financier."

"Young man," began Mrs. A. H. Stobbs, "you have an honest face—"

Paymaster was backing away toward the revolving door. Outside was the world—the good old, wicked old world of adventure—always in a new mood, always seductive, always human, always rather kind. Paymaster paused on the threshold before plunging into it.

"Thank you, ma'am, for those few kind words," he called back to her with a grin.

Then the flow of the downtown crowd, outside on the sidewalk, swallowed him.

The Flowering Heart

by
JULIUS GRINNELL FURTHMANN

ILLUSTRATED BY HANSON BOOTH

TOM COULAHAN and Cora Gertz sat on the third step of her front stoop and considered a magic October moon. It was a little after nine; a church clock, faint, very far off, had struck. Opposite, Yedda Street lay dark and quiet, where a looming, ugly row of frame shacks rather ferociously bearded a lovely skyline; but the moon swung in a high, sane arc, and Tom and Cora sat there dreaming—and wondering at their dream.

The girl spoke in a hushed voice.

"Look....Aint it really beautiful?"

Tom stared, awe-struck.

She ran on. "It's one of the big sights of the world—the moon.... That, and a great, wavin' field o' grass, and old oaks in the wind, and a young girl—and a child.... It's always a wonder to me, Tom. Always. I wish there was some place up there—way, way up—where we could walk—just us—a beautiful place all sweet and clean and bright—"

She felt Tom tremble. "It's great," he answered her, as best he could. "Simply great. Affects me just like the Salvation Army. Somehow, the old moon puts a new look—a new shine—on this dirty, rotten hole—"

Cora hastily withdrew her hand.

"Tom!" called a small, uncertain



voice out of the dark on their right. "Tom!" it wheezed again.

Tom growled: "Well, what d'ye want?" and an old man slowly picked his way out of the shadow into the fair light.

Cora peered at him curiously. Old Jerry Coulahan was a little man, round of figure and flatly shod, with a face all wrinkled and twisted in one grin, perpetual, clownish, and wry. He cocked his head at them quizzically. He looked like a man who had struggled through fifty or sixty years of direst poverty to find life the best joke of them all. Old Jerry had no teeth. That, perhaps, was one of the secrets of his unfading smile. His mouth merely followed the line of the skull and grinned. He stood in the white, sheer light, nervously crushing an old slouch hat, a bit uncertain—first on one foot, then on the other.

"Lad," he whined, "wont ye come here?"

Tom sprang up.

"What d'ye mean by comin' around here an' botherin' me like this?"—as if he knew very well what the old man was after.

Old Jerry shrank back a step and Tom strode over; Cora turned away, looking down the street. She could hear them singing at the corner saloon. The old



With three steps and a jump, the girl framed herself in the doorway A little dazed, Jerry and the old



old wife hung back, peering at her. "I did this thing," she stammered at them. "It's all my fault!"

man leaned on Tom's shoulder, whispering, and Tom reluctantly shoved a hand into his pocket.

Two nickels.

"Be off now!" ordered Tom, turning. "An' ye come home lushed there'll be trouble."

They watched the old man shamble away. Tom's passion seemed frank, vigorous, and natural. He grumbled, half affectionately: "The old fink! He aint worked at his trade for comin' on eight year; ever since I quit sellin' papers an' went to work drivin' a wagon."

The Coulahans lived next door. At twenty-four Tom was large and ruddy, with a curling mop of blackest hair. He was tall and broad; therefore he carried himself with a truculent look of face and droop of shoulder—a daring, open manner, careless of speech, and gay at heart.

Cora and he made a good-looking pair.

She was a Luxembourger; nineteen, robust and blond and soft. She stood almost as tall as Tom—a big girl, full of fine, imperfect curves. But not too big. She had a neck like a smooth, white shaft, an upper lip too short for beauty, and a chin too full for humility. Her father, Herman Gertz, kept a cobbler's bench in a small shoe store over in West Madison Avenue. The family had moved into Yedda Street only two months before; nevertheless Tom had arrived at that mental state where he believed that she would be a mighty fine thing to have running around a little place of their own—with a few other little things besides porch vines and morning glories and chickens.

"Tom!" shrilled a tired, querulous voice.

Tom leaned hard against the step.

Cora made out a tiny, bent figure creeping toward them. Tom answered gruffly: "Well, Ma, what's the worry now?"

The old mother hesitated in the shadow. All Cora could see was a shrunken little figure and two great eyes shining dimly like fading stars. The girl felt an odd thrill as the old woman crept into the light. Mrs. Coulahan presented that appearance of sagacity so roundly pro-

duced by a shaking head, a long, hooked nose, and a pursed lip. Cora thought she looked like an old witch. A grey, wiry strand of hair escaped the tight little knot at the back of her head. It hung dangling over her left eye. From time to time the old woman twitched the lock nervously.

"Tom," she quavered, "did ye see yer father?"

The boy said yes, that the old man had gone down the street.

"To the corner?"

"Yes, Ma, to Noonan's place."

The old mother crept closer.

"Did ye give him annythin'?"

Tom felt Cora stir.

"Well, what of it?" he demanded.

"Tom, lad, I only wanted to know."

The old woman shrank away, a little frightened, a little bewildered before their stony faces, and after a bit she stole off into the shadows, going toward the corner, talking softly to herself. They heard her mumbling something about a son that tormented his father and mother when he was a kid, bullied and fought them when he grew big and strong, and owned them body and soul now that he had a job and they were weak and old. Half way down the street the old woman paused in a vagrant bar of moonlight, and turning, shook her fist at them shrewishly.

"Go on!" yelled Tom.

Cora felt sorry for Tom, that he should have such parents, but as she inspected his face and saw how angry and flushed it was, she didn't. They sat in an unpleasant silence. The moon still swung high and sweet and bright. Yedda Street scowled back. Its only lights were those dim, yellow flares produced by oil that throw such big, discouraging shadows—in bare, dingy front rooms, in desolate courts and ugly backyards, a single light for the entire house, and that feebly slanting in a tiny kitchen—the saddest lights in the world, the dim, despairing beacons of the poorest poor. As it was, the brightest light in the street shone forth from the corner saloon, Noonan's place, whence came, occasionally, a rude burst of song prodigally mingled with the cracked strains of an electric piano, and again, sounds of a rough scuffle—

the noisy rattling and banging of chairs—a rising tumult of angry voices—thumping feet—curses. Cora felt sorry for the old woman that she had to go down there and look for her man.

And suddenly, the heavy quiet was broken by the brisk pad of steps on the wooden walk, a loud, important cough, then:

"Mister Coulandt, good evening!"

Cora started up. A big figure loomed. It was her father. Tom stood up clumsily, mumbling good evening, and got out of the way. Gertz waited, scowling thoughtfully. Besides being an honest shoemaker, Gertz was an ardent pinochleur, and an experienced Socialist. He divided his time between these three occupations with great exactitude, heartily damning the Leather Trust for his increasing poverty and a recent immigration to Yedda Street from six palatial rooms in West Chicago Avenue.

He was stout and red faced, about forty-five, comfortably moulded on a big frame. Like Cora, in a way. But he was florid and pasty, where she was pink and white. He stared at Tom with a fierce, haughty gaze.

"It was a nice evening!" he roared suddenly, so they jumped. He gave a great, echoing laugh. "Myself, I lofe the moony light. I like it best to walk in under trees. It takes me back, back, back—Ah, the gardens of old Luxembourg! Cora, it comes ten o'clock!" And the big shoemaker rushed past them upstairs. They heard him shout a greeting to his wife.

Tom laughed as they sat down.

"There's nothing to it," he said, smiling; "he's some pleasant old party—your old man!" It was only his way, but Cora swung around, stiff, flaring mad. And hit spang out.

"Is that so? Well, I wanna' tell ye, Tom Coulahan, that my pa aint like some people! No sir; he works every day. That's something. I don't have to work. Nor my ma, either. I would, but my pa says no, that I should stay by my mother. We aint got nothing much, but we're happy, and that's a whole lot. That's what counts. Just being happy and kind—"

"Aw, Cora—"

"You can't say that! No sir. You and your folks fight like cats and dogs from mornin' to night! It's terrible the way ye do at your house. You don't know how it sounds to folks outside. I don't see how ye live like ye do! I couldn't—"

Tom scarcely heard her. His eyes sought her flushed, upturned face for an instant, then fell to measure the distance between her hand and his. The angry, confident poise of her head fascinated him marvelously, and left him wondering at the firm, red line of her lips, the round, full cutting of her chin, and as she turned, looking at him fearlessly, gravely, his heart fairly rocked and swelled before the rare sweetness of her level, wide-set eyes, and the soft, rosy curve of her cheek. He grabbed at her hand.

"Now listen, girl!"—masterfully. "I was only kiddin' ye. What ye say about my folks is pretty near right. They're a fine lot! Your folks is different. But honest, kid, if I asked ye to, wouldn't ye come along with me? Wouldn't ye now? Ye'll like my folks when ye get used to them. It may be hard at first, but they aint so bad, sometimes—"

Cora breathed in once, hard.

"Why—look at me!" cried Tom. "I've lived with them all my life,"—laughing a little. "I don't see how I'd be able to leave them; they're old; they'd starve sure."

Then catching sight of her blank, unbelieving face, he added fiercely, wildly: "At that, they aint goin' to make a botch of it 'tween you an' me; they aint goin' to spoil my life—"

Cora pushed him away.

"I tell ye, Tom, I wont!"—with vigor. "It's got to be some other way. I knew ye was goin' to ask me. I was tryin' to make ye understand how I felt. I can't go to your place. I couldn't. Your folks hate me. I heard them say so—"

"No such thing!" mumbled Tom.

"There'd be nothin' but trouble, trouble all day long. I know. Ten times worse 'an now. That aint what I want; no sir. I don't want much—I only want to be happy. It takes a lot of givin' up to get it. I didn't used to think so, but I'm learnin' different every day. Tom, if I'm goin' to have a little home and a

couple of kids, I wanna be happy all day. I wanna be waitin' for my man; I wanna be singin' when he comes home from work—"

"Go on!" cried Tom, as if he were listening to the song of songs. "Go on, girl!"

Cora was crying before him.

"There aint any more," she muttered, sponging her wet cheeks. "That's all there is to it. Aint it enough?" Then, fearfully: "Say, ye aint goin' to be mad with me for some of the things I said, are ye?"

"Mad at ye?" cried Tom. "Mad at ye? Why, bless ye, no. I'd liked to have said 'em myself; but ye took 'em and made a song. An' would I get mad at ye? Honey, I love ye for it—"

His voice ran off, and as he leaned nearer, the girl turned and he felt her warm, sweet breath fan his cheek and her hand tighten in his. Tom thought he had never seen water so deep and still as her eyes; then her breath quickened; she was wondering, daring, and then he heard her sigh; twice she sighed, and as if suddenly tired, she put her cheek against his shoulder. And so Tom knew that he had said enough.

Upstairs Herman Gertz rested his great pipe. "Hilda!" he warned his drowsy spouse, who, at forty, was a frank, fat edition of Cora, "it comes past eleven o'clock"—puff, puff—"and Tom Coulandt sits on my steps. Call Cora once."

Puff, puff.

She sat up, smiling at a dream.

"Wait, Herman!" she counseled, sleepily. "Let them be. Cora likes him. She says he is a good boy. He makes twelve dollars every week." She patted his arm fondly. "Herman, where they sit it is moony light!"

Very much happened yet that night. Old Jerry came reeling home and set Tom roaring like a stricken bull. Cora heard them at it—Tom and his father and mother—the old woman shrilly putting in for the old man; and at last Cora fell asleep to dream of troop after troop of little children, their eyes aflame, doing the turkey trot.

Yedda Street is thoroughly dull and unlovely. It is neither fish, flesh, nor fowl; nor good, red herring. From one house you can look spang into the rooms across the way. You can even hear people talking and laughing and crying in them.

The next night, Friday, Tom trudged home in a black, fearful mood. He should have been most happy; but love is an irrational disorder, and to prove it, when Tom reached the steps of his own front stoop, he turned angrily and shook his fist at the black skies.

And then, as in mighty rebuke, with a great swishing and cheering of wind, the rain roared down. It beat a loud tattoo in the street. It blotted out the view. Tom staggered indoors. He could see nothing but grey, driving rain, grey spouts of rain, grey clouds which burst rain, grey heavens which opened and poured rain—cold rain, icy-cold rain, October rain. The street became a narrow, brimming puddle. A vast, grey blot of darkness descended, and peal after peal of thunder shook the dancing roof.

And so, while the storm bellowed without, Tom bellowed within—over the hamburger steak (at eighteen cents the pound) and cold potatoes and bread.

He growled: "I wont stand for it, I say!" and old Jerry and the old wife sat trembling, unable to speak or eat. "I wont have it! The old man runnin' around the streets at all hours, an' swillin' beer at Noonan's like he owned a brewery—an' was boostin' the brand."

The old woman scolded: "Tom, ye give him the money yerself. Jerry, will ye hush? Why must ye forever be baitin' the lad? Tom, dear, he's your own father—"

Tom sprang up.

"Ye didn't touch yer supper," begged his mother. "Lad, what has come over ye lately? Where ye off to in this rain?"

The boy paused in the door.

"Aw, sit down. I'm not goin' anywheres. Just watch me. I'm goin' upstairs to water a few buttercups the roof aint leaked in on!" They heard him go pounding upstairs.

Next door. "Do you love him much?" asked the mother in German. "I don't know," stammered Cora. "I don't know."

I feel—so. When he touches me, everything seems to run to that spot—see!”—and she pointed to a radiant, blooming geranium nestling on the window-sill. “Yesterday it was nothing but leaves and hard, green buds. To-day it has a little water, a little sun—and look! I feel like that—my heart also—in flower. But what are we going to do?” She began to cry softly. The older woman had no answer for her, except to draw the girl’s fair head down on her big, soft breast, mothering her silently, just as she always had. She said presently: “You must wait, little heart. Will you obey me?”

Cora promised.

Later, old Jerry and his wife still were huddled in the tiny kitchen, considering the warm stove, thanking a wet heaven for the spent storm, and wondering what terrible thing was going to happen next. They went on talking about Tom—saying that the lad was a strange son to them, now that he had grown up and was earning a decent wage, and that if it weren’t for the looks of the thing, he’d have his old mother and father out in the streets begging.

“If he once gets the marryin’ bug in that black head o’ his,” whined old Jerry, “you an’ me is gawn. I see it—”

And he scratched his old head. He was bald, except for a half thatch of hair—scant, a silver yellow, shining—which in the light seemed to couch around his crown like a halo that had been stove in over his big, flapping ears.

The old mother sat nodding.

“It’s our own fault,” she muttered bitterly. “It’s our own fault. Didn’t we bring him up that way?” she added, a little fierce, a little wild, as if the thought had stung her for a long time. “We never had much luck with Tom, even from the first. He was ever a stubborn, willful lad. Jerry, ye would give him pennies to be good!”

Said old Jerry: “Ay, I mind the times well. He would never learn conduct. What could I do? It was either a penny or the threat of a lickin’. B’cripes,” he chuckled, “six out o’ ten, when it were all over, the little devil had both!”

The old woman cackled.

“We forever were doin’ it,” she smiled,

leaning forward and banging at the stove.

They spoke affectionately now—proudly, as if it were yesterday.

“He would never mind me,” she ran on. “He was never to be caught at school—never at rest for a bit of mischief. D’ye mind the time I had him pinched for runnin’ with that Corcoran gang in West Iola Street?”

“Do I!” cried old Jerry, as if it were a great day. “The whole neighborhood was in court. Tom laughed at the judge an’ told him we was a-scared to lick him—the little devil—’cause he’d run away, and then ye begged the lad off.”

He giggled.

“As I’ve done for ye many’s the time!” snapped the old woman.

“Ah, Tom is a queer, queer lad. Ye must take him as ye find him. We didn’t think it were much to worry at years ago—that neither of us could handle him—but look what it’s come to now! Jerry, d’ye mind the time ye was hurt with the fallin’ bricks, an’ little Tom only fifteen months a babe?”

Jerry touched his scars reverently, one by one.

“Well, the neighbors all said wean him, but would ye believe it, the lad was that headstrong even then, an’ wouldn’t be weaned.” And the old mother leaned back triumphantly.

They laughed together, like two children.

Old Jerry broke off suddenly: “Now he’s neck an’ ears with the Dutch! He an’ Dutch Cora. He’s been over there more ’an six times in the last two weeks—ever since they moved in, bad luck to them!” He wandered a little, then: “Do ye mind the day? She had a lot of nerve. She up an’ spoke to the lad to come an’ help her with a bit of a box.”

“Hush!” scolded the old woman. “Ye’ll have Tom on ye like that!” Then, as the old man stood looking for his hat, she demanded: “Where ye goin’ now?”

Old Jerry mumbled something.

“Nah!” she retorted. “Not a cint have I got for ye. Where am I goin’ to get money? Tom said this mornin’ that if we couldn’t get along on what he’s givin’ me he’ll go somewhere else an’ live.”

Upstairs, staring in the dark, Tom

heard their voices parleying clearly. The old woman commenced a rattling at the stove. He couldn't catch what the old man said. "Aint they a fine lot?" he muttered to himself.

Saturday night was pay-day. The shipping department was paid last. When Tom at length stood at the cashier's window, he stared at the regulator. Eight o'clock. He grabbed his envelope and ran. Cora was out on her front stoop when he came up the walk.

"'Lo, Tom!"

"'Lo, Cora!"

"Hard day at the store?"

"Kinda. Awful warm."

"Oh, I'd hardly say that!"

Tom opened his mouth—hesitated. Cora thought he looked excited. Then, as if pent up, Tom burst out: "Well, honey, I'm goin' to do it!"

Cora jumped.

"Do what?"

Speechless, Tom flourished an important-looking paper. He put it into her hands as if that, of all things, would speak where he couldn't. But Cora folded it twice, primly, and only looked at him.

"It's the license," he stammered at last. "I got it at the City Hall this afternoon. Cora, look at it!" he besought her, as though it were the only tangible thing he had in the world—something for them both to hold to.

Cora cried: "Tom!" Then she looked at the license, hopelessly: "We can't!"

"Why not?"—stricken. "Why not, I said?"

"Ma wont let me. She said we must wait. I promised."

"What of it?" cried Tom, scornfully.

"I can't get my clothes. Oh Tom, what shall I do?"

"Look at me!" Cora looked. "I'm crazy for ye. Daffy. Do ye trust me, say?"—A quick nod. "Would ye go with me—clothes or no clothes?"—Pause.

"Would ye, I said?"

A nod.

"Now then," said Tom, "wait here. I'm goin' for my grip. I'll only be a second an'—" He rushed away, only to come running back. His hands trembled on Cora's shoulders. "If ye hear anythin' goin' on over at the house, ye sit still,

d'ye mind?" And Tom skipped indoors.

It was early. As yet the moon hadn't come up to the gate of the narrow lane of sky above Yedda Street; but the great stars gave the night a kind of glimmering clearness. Five minutes later, Cora still sat on the stoop, growing restless but saying to herself that Tom would be back in a minute—that everything was going to be all right; that she hated to wait; that Pa and Ma Gertz would be terribly mad at her for running off; that Tom was awful slow; he better hurry—

She knew that, judging from the light, the Coulahans were in the kitchen. She listened to the faint rumble of voices that came to her, vaguely wondering whom they were talking about; the rumble grew louder and louder, and finally went on in a medley between three voices—two of them shrill and appealing, the other loud and defiant.

Cora heard Tom telling the old people that he was going away for good.

"Have ye made up yer mind, Tom?" begged the mother. "Are ye set?"

Tom answered, doggedly: "I am set."

"Come lad, ye don't mean it?"

Cora thrilled at the agonized entreaty that twisted up through the mother's voice.

"Do I mean it?" Tom laughed mirthlessly. "Look at me grip."

Then the mother again: "Ye're a bad, black-hearted lad!" And Tom: "Let me pass, will ye?" Old Jerry: "Let him go! Let him go an' have done. He wants to be rid of us; he'd be glad to see us beggin' in the streets—go on to yer Dutch Cora, I say—who's too proud an' fine for yer old folks—go an' live with them Honyaks—if ye can—ye an' yer cold, Dutch nun! Look at him—look at his pale face—let him go, I say, an' good riddance!"

Cora clenched her fists. She could almost see the old man at it, his face twisting in that unfading smirk.

"I've stood enough from you!" Tom declared. Then the mother begged: "Tom, don't mind him!" And Tom again: "I wanna tell ye both something: I've got to go. Ye drove me to it—"

Old Jerry giggled.

"Ye've been houndin' me ever since I could walk," Tom went on after an

ominous silence. "When ye weren't at one another, ye was at me. I had to run away from ye—stay out in the street till things quieted down. Sometimes I'd have to stay out all night. That's a fine way to raise a kid, aint it? Ye only let me alone when I got big. Then ye was afraid to lick me. The old man will remember some of the trimmin's I gave him—"

Jerry snarled impotently.

"An' after that, all ye could do was wail, an' that mornin' to night, like a couple o' kids. So I've had ye both on my shoulders, an' yer a fine, big load, tryin' to pull me down, hangin' on, hangin' on like—like—" His voice broke, ran off; then: "I'm not happy here. I never was. Ye want to spoil my life. Ye don't want me to have anythin' good an' worth havin'—like that girl waitin' out there—"

Old Jerry spoke: "Let him go, wife!" and Tom said, almost gently: "Stand aside, Ma."

"Lad, don't leave me," begged the mother, piteously. Cora leaned back against the step, giddy and torn. A black, overpowering sense of guilt compassed her. She was fast realizing in her dumb way that she had asked Tom to make this ruthless sacrifice. Everything seemed to be slipping away from her. What could she do? Then, stirring her apathy, came the mother's voice:

"Well, go. Then we'll have some peace. Only old Jerry an' me. I wont last long, an' I kinda got a feelin' that he'll take care of me. But I thought ye would, Tom. I thought ye would. I aint goin' to curse ye, either. It aint no use. It aint no use. This same thing will come upon ye soon enough—just as it has on yer father an' me—"

Cora bowed her head. She had come to see clearly. She felt stung with awe, as if she had peered behind a forbidden wall, as if she had coughed aloud in church. She saw her own life laid bare and judged. Hers and Tom's. Would her children—the children of dreams—use Tom and her like that? When they were old and ugly and useless? Feathers and dust, to be tossed up and flung away?

Then: "It's always hard for a man to give up," she heard the old woman say.

"Always. When there's any givin' up, the woman gets the job. A man never sees what a woman gives up. She gives up her peace. She gives up her share of joy in the world. All for a child; all for a kid like ye, Tom—who'll leave her to starve when she is old."

Cora clenched her hands. "*It takes a lot of givin' up to be happy*"—her own words to Tom. "*I didn't used to think so, but I'm learnin' different every day.*" Great emotions are our high tides. Cora was learning two things very quickly—to love and to give up. Zip went the dreams of yesterday. A new feeling, at once poignant and tender, tore at her heart. She grasped the side of the stoop.

And— "Ah, ye smile, lad, an' I ken what yer after thinkin'. Yer thinkin' that yer smarter 'an yer father were—all young lads thinks that. Tom, ye aint; an' not half so good lookin'. Ye wont do anny better 'an we did. It's the good Lord's curse on fathers an' mothers that make playthings of their children; that don't know how to be kind an' right with 'em; that fools an' neglects 'em when they're little. I hated to whip ye, Tom. So did yer father. We used to laugh at yer divilmint. Now we're payin' for it, an' payin' hard."

Her voice quavered off, and Cora could see their shadows playing at the door.

"Tom!" she called, once, twice. "Tom!"

And with three steps and a jump, she framed herself in the doorway. Tom she met on the threshold. He grabbed at her heavily, as he would have reached for a lamp-post.

A little dazed, Jerry and the old wife hung back, peering at her, all eyes and mouth.

Cora took the stage breathlessly.

"I did this thing," she stammered at them. "It's all my fault. But I wanna make it up to you. I wanna make it up to you—if you will only let me come here to live!"

And she tore away from Tom's clutching hands, and radiant, cast herself down on her knees before the old people, bowing her head, as for a blessing.

"Jerry!" cried the old mother, suddenly, "take off yer hat!"

Free Speech

by
WALLACE
IRVIN

Author of "Letters of a Japanese School-boy," "The Quest of the Golden Goat," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY
R E A I R V I N



THE governor of the state sat at his desk and held his poor head, a head from which the veins stood prominently against a background of greenish tint; for the governor was, as it were, staving off a bilious attack with one hand and guiding the ship with the other. The room was empty for the first time in several hours, giving the executive a chance to groan in private. The portrait of Lincoln on the opposite wall heard the moan, but made no response. It was a particularly unresponsive portrait, being an average example of political art, included in the specifications when the capitol was built; and the master who had limned, by the job, the features of the great liberator, had managed to impart thereto an expression of cynic mirth, notoriously un-Lincolnian.

It had been a hard day for the governor, a day that had strained his celebrated smile to the breaking point. He had been in pain and everybody had been talking at once, as far back as he could remember. The human voice had tweaked

his nerve-ends like instruments of torture, and they were at it yet. Outside in the lobbies the great hive was buzzing, buzzing, talk, talk—that ceaseless afflatus of ideas, arguments, buncomb, patriotism, statistics, palaver, which the small politician breathes and lives upon.

The governor was about to open a campaign for re-election, and committees with all sorts of strange requests, taking advantage of the situation, had surrounded him like wolves around the desert camp-fire, confusing him with their hungry yawping.

State Senator Burgh, the wrong-headedest old mule in the party, had nailed him with two hours of unbroken monologue touching upon the iniquity of the Cuthcart Drainage bill; a delegation of ladies from the Home Savers' League had swarmed in like soprano locusts; the attorney-general, a conscientious man with heavy brown eyes and a muscular jaw, had imposed an exhaustive and exhausting verbal report on the Pie Hill riots; a friend, a campaign manager, a boss, a clergyman and a Socialist mayor

had come to converse and remained to talk.

The governor wiped the crystal beads from his three-story brow and envied the ancient mariner. His secretary, a hard task-master, entered hurriedly.

"A committee from the Adulteration League has been waiting since noon to—"

"Is that man Dogberry with 'em?" asked the chief, attempting to rearrange his public smile.

"Certainly. He's chairman." The secretary's manner was inexorable.

"Phew! He stutters and insists on long speeches," murmured the afflicted man.

"He holds the Twenty-eighth in the hollow of his hand," replied the secretary.

"Who else?" inquired the governor, pointing toward the ante-room.

"Hiram Lewis, the Blarney County leader; two editors and eight reporters; a delegation from the Pessimists' Club, and—let me see—" The secretary consulted his pad. "Oh, yes. There's a lawyer named Higgins with a petition to commute sentence on the convict, Dinkel, under sentence for that Ansen jail-delivery murder last spring."

"Isn't he hanged yet?" inquired the executive, absent-mindedly.

"He's due for the twenty-third—it's now the twenty-first. The case has been before you for several weeks."

"To be sure," sighed the governor. "Send the man in and tell him to be brief."

A tall young man with white eyelashes and complexion of such tender blondness that when he blushed—which he often did—the rosy color of his skin showed plainly through his flaxen hair, entered and began at once to talk in the silvery, mechanical voice of an agent selling a set of Macauley's works on the easy installment plan. This was Mr. Higgins, attorney for Dinkel. He began to analyze the law profoundly, assuming his favorite jury-winning attitude. The governor raised a fat, restraining hand.

"You can't impress *me* with legal phraseology," said the great man. "Give me the human side of the case—I don't want to spend the rest of the afternoon

listening to 'aforesaid.' Dinkel, as I have it, was one of three convicts who, in breaking out of the Ansen prison last April, resisted the guards, and in the fracas two prisoners and one guard were killed. Dinkel, the surviving man, was condemned to die. That's the case, is it not?"

"Yes, sir. But I have here twelve pages of affidavits swearing to my client's good character and denying his actual participation in the murder. If you have time, I should like to read them to you—"

"Don't!" moaned the governor, holding his throbbing temples. "Do you want to talk me to death?"

"Under the peculiar circumstances, my client wishes me to make a plea of clemency in his behalf."

"What peculiar circumstances?" asked the governor, gazing into the stormy court without, where a dumpy statue of Nathan Hale dripped forlornly.

"Here's the man's deposition," explained the attorney, laying a long, folded manuscript on the desk. "It's his story, told in his own words. If you'll allow me to suggest it, the petition must be acted upon at once, as Dinkel's execution is set for Friday morning."

"I'll look it over, Mr. Higgins," said the executive, motioning the young man to the ante-room. As Higgins withdrew, the governor adjusted his eye-glasses and read:

All the world's a stage, and the men and women are mostly talkers, if your excellency will pardon the liberty I take. But the stage of the world is peculiar in this: Nearly everybody is spouting and performing behind the footlights, while those who sit in the audience are very few. I am what is known as a born listener, one of those unhappy mortals singled out from childhood as an easy victim for the garrulous. You would imagine that I, as an habitual listener, would have absorbed more wisdom than I have. But this does not necessarily follow. Talk, as I have found it, is not an expression of thought, but a vacant enjoyment of sound—as witness the negro who, least mental of people, talks the most.

My name is Rienzi D. Dinkel (the D

stands for Demosthenes) and my father gained his early education as a "barker" or "ballyhoo man," employed by the job at county fairs. Later in life he took up the more dignified trade of life insurance solicitor. It was then the period of tontine policies and father was the dread and admiration of the uninsured. His motto in conversation was, "Listen to nobody but yourself;" his results justified his methods. With him, gab was not only a gift; it was a violent mania; and he sat like a windmill within the home circle, forever stirring the air with dissertations.

My mother, my Aunt Esther, my Uncle Enoch, were also great talkers. One of my earliest childhood memories was the four of them going all at once in a quadrangular discussion, piling adjective upon adverb, nobody listening to anybody else or gaining the least information from any of the others. They were also talented solo talkers.

In such a family, I nearly failed to learn the English language, because I so seldom got a chance to speak it. I was one of those backward children, born with a weak, agreeable smile and a habit of giving sympathetic attention to the person addressing me. Had I but learned the egotist's trick of letting his gaze wander when the other fellow has the floor, my history might have been a happier one.

Yes, I was a born listener, and my family took advantage of it from the first. Day after day my father singled me out to brag about his business triumphs; my mother chose me to hear her grievances against my father. When my Uncle Enoch called, it was to me he related his reminiscences of the Civil War, because the rest of the family were too busy talking about themselves to bother with Enoch. My Aunt Esther afflicted me more than anybody else. She was a Spiritualist and on clammy autumn evenings when the wind was moaning outside, she would get me in a corner and boast of her influential acquaintances on the other side.

Never being allowed to get a word in edgewise, I formed no opinions of my own, but a morbid craving for quietude and reflection haunted me. I wanted a

chance to read poetry or write essays, to creep away to some vast wilderness and get acquainted with my soul—and that was the chance I never got.

Once I stole away into the woodshed with a volume of Browning, but Uncle Enoch discovered me almost immediately and punished me severely by talking steadily for three solid hours. Sometimes I would go out for long, silent rambles after dark. I seldom got more than a block before some garrulous person, attracted by my sympathetic smile, would afflict me with an endless hard-luck story until I sought refuge in flight.

I learned the trade of accountant and lived with my family until my twenty-seventh year, when I escaped. They were in the midst of a political discussion at the time, so they did not notice my departure. I went to the city and looked for work. For two or three months I applied from place to place, only to be passed on by large, egotistical proprietors who insisted on patronizing me with gratuitous advice. Finally, I obtained work as bundle-wrapper in a department store.

It was here I met the two people who fixed my fate—Lorna Smythe and Lorenzo McNulty. Lorenzo worked next to me at the bundle counter and later became my room-mate at Madam Hennessey's, where I stayed. Miss Smythe boarded at the same place and worked at a counter near mine at the department store. Lorenzo, standing elbow to elbow with me all day long, spotted me at once as a good listener, and directed at me his inexhaustible supply of words. He knew all the averages of the National League and recited them over and over every morning like a litany. He spent his evenings attending vaudeville performances for no other purpose, so far as I could see, than to learn new jokes to tell me so he might enjoy my never-failing smiles.

We both fell in love with Lorna Smythe about the same time.

Lorna was one of the sort of girls who have the same number of teeth and eyes and noses as other girls, but these features seemed to be assembled on her face in a way that was remarkably unrepulsive. She used to come around to

our counter to borrow string at the lunch hour, and I began to suspect her of lingering a trifle longer than was necessary. Certainly she did not come to see Lorenzo, whose face was his misfortune. He wasn't any match for me—until he began to talk.

I think what attracted me most to her was her gift of silence. You know a lover's imagination gets to dwelling fondly on some ideal situation, and I loved to think of Lorna and me sitting in some perfectly silent suburb, holding hands and not saying a word for weeks at a time. Even now I cannot call up that picture without happy tears springing to my eyes. I was mad to possess her.

It was in the parlor of Madam Hennessey's that my Waterloo was fought. There was a bright red sofa under an enlarged crayon portrait of the late Mr. Hennessey, and there I would usually find Lorna, reading alone, if I got there early enough. I won her confidence in my voiceless, sympathetic way. She was almost as silent as I. It was the things she didn't say to me that made me perfectly happy. After a while my hand would steal closer and closer to hers, until it rested on her thumb—and then that bore Lorenzo would show up. And he would begin to talk about himself. He stood on an eminence, a letter "I" as tall as the Washington monument, and sur-

veyed the world below. He would tell about the baseball game *he* saw, just where *he* sat, and how it affected *him* when a star player made a home run for Detroit and just what *he* said to the pitcher when that individual went wild, elaborating *his* opinions as he went on.

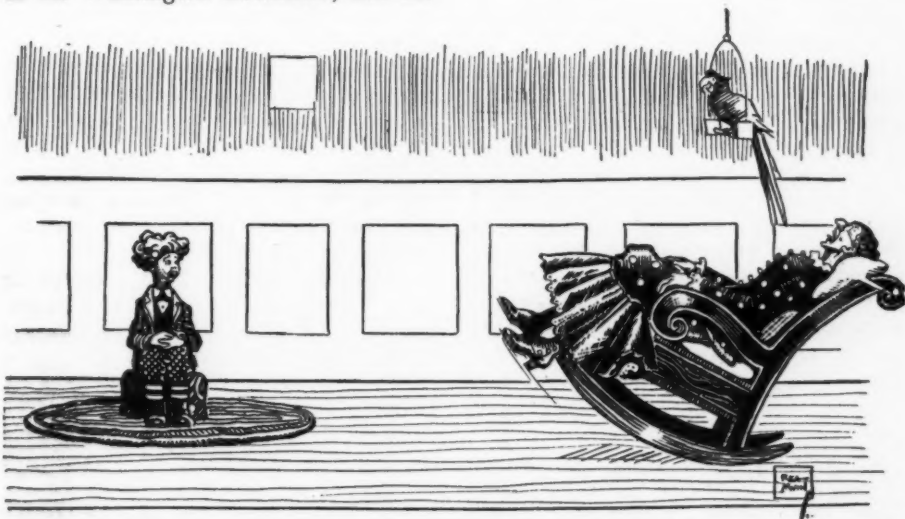
Much as I loathed Lorenzo, a lifelong habit compelled an expression of ecstatic interest to overspread my face. And so Lorenzo rambled on and on:

"Say, there's a funny gink playing up to the Bijou Theatre this week. He's dressed up like a comedy sailor and got the dottiest mug y' ever saw. His special-ty is playin' 'Il Trovatore' on the saxophone, and in the middle of it he'll stop and say, 'Who made that noise?' It's a scream. Aint y' seen it?"

I confessed huskily that I had not. Scarcely concealing his pity, he went on:

"There's another stunt there I call all to the mustard. Two comedy Dutchmen—y' ought to hear me take 'em off! One says, 'Mike, der country must be very prosperous—no more poor peoples on der street.' The other one says, 'No, Honus, you don't see dose poor peoples because half of 'em is killed py der automobiles und der oder half is afraid to come out.' That gotta big rise out o' me."

It was easy to see that Lorna was be-



I was a born listener . . . On clammy autumn evenings my Aunt Esther, who was a spiritualist, would get me in a corner and boast of her influential acquaintances on the other side.

coming hypnotized by this line of talk. I did not blame the poor girl. Words, I think, are like other forms of insidious gas; they intoxicate up to a certain point, then they stifle. Lorna moved closer to him as he talked, and at some gag, more vacuous than the rest, she would turn to me and say:

"Isn't he great?"

"Isn't he!" I would reply enthusiastically, not being able to express my opinion in any other way. I would hang on as long as I could, but finally the steady fire would become too much for me and I would retreat, leaving Lorna in possession of the enemy. Lorenzo would come up to bed about midnight, perfectly happy and still talking. He would keep me awake several hours telling me of a withering retort he once made to a fresh floorwalker at Yard & Gimp's. Finally, he would slip into Dreamland and spend the rest of the night snoring and talking in his sleep.

After five or six months of somewhat the same program as outlined above, my romance suddenly terminated with a bump. I met Lorna in a hallway and made the longest speech of my life:

"I'm twenty-eight years old; my father's left me some real estate in his will and I'm in love," I said. "Will you?"

"No," she replied. "I'm promised to Mr. McNulty."

"What! To *that* laughing jackass?" I growled.

"Sir!" said Lorna, drawing away her skirts, "be careful how you talk! You know you admire his conversational gifts as much as I do."

That night I went to my room a changed and bitter man. All my life I had been like the receiving wax in a phonograph, a tool only useful for absorbing the conversation of others. Talk had ruined my childhood, driven me from home, poisoned my youth and wrecked the romance of my life. From earliest infancy my ego, wedged among egotists, had lain like a blunted chisel, unable to get in edgewise.

I lay on my bed thinking those baleful thoughts and moaning to myself. Suddenly I leaped to my feet and made a stern resolve. I would be passive no longer. If my tongue was too sluggish to

defend me, I would fall back on the weapons of the cave man. I would have silence at any cost.

I heard my room-mate's footsteps coming up the stairs and the grating tones of his voice relating a comic anecdote to some unfortunate on the landing below. With maniac stealth I seized from a corner a damaged baseball bat, one of Lorenzo's cherished trophies of the National League. He opened the door, still talking, and closed it between a comma and a semicolon. He might have noticed the expression of venomous hate which disfigured my features, but, like all egoists, Lorenzo had a way of talking to a man without really seeing him. He went right on to his doom:

"Say, it looks good to *me*, and if they'd only brace up, just as *I* said, and put some ginger in the outfield, *I* think we ought to hand 'em a few. As *I* told the guy that sat next to *me*, 'If *I* was manager of that team, you wouldn't see Johnson gettin' by *me* with that ragged fumble!' And the guy looked at *me* and said—"

"Stop!" I growled.

Lorenzo had never heard me speak like that and he poised his flight in mid-air.

"What's the matter with you—what *you* buttin' in for?" he gasped in indignant surprise.

"I don't want any more talk," said I, taking firmer hold on the bat.

"I like your nerve—aint this a free country? Aint I gotta right to free speech? Now key down, Bill—I wanta tell you—"

"Tell me nothing!" I roared, catching him by the lapel of his coat. Lorenzo, still unaffected, went on:

"You remind me of a story Harry La Page told last night at the Queen vaudeville. It seems there was an Irishman workin' in a ditch, and along comes a Dago. The Irishman's name was Mike, and he says to the Dago—"

I heard no more. Atavistic fire surged through my brain and I swung on my tormenter, wielding the bat with all the strength of my two arms. Lorenzo emitted a gurgle, while the bat, as though still true to the traditions of the diamond, struck three times and then broke

in the middle. Lorenzo fell like a bundle of rags and lay perfectly still for the first time in our acquaintance. I rested and surveyed the room calmly. A chair, a chandelier and a window were broken; my room-mate was bleeding profusely. I was a murderer, glorying strangely in my deed.

As I walked down the stairs and out into the hall I met the landlady, who greeted me with the suspicion peculiar to her kind.

"What was the noise up there?"

"I've just killed Lorenzo," I answered smilingly as I stepped forth into the night.

At the corner I met a policeman and promptly gave myself up. How my trial went you probably know. I was saved from the charge of murder by the miraculous recovery of Lorenzo, who, inside of two weeks, was about town boasting prodigiously of his part in the tragedy. All I can remember of my trial is that

it seemed to take a tremendous amount of talking to convict me. An unnecessary number of lawyers talked over, around and through me; Lorenzo boasted from the witness chair and the district attorney made my head ache in his address to the jury. As usual, I was the only silent person in the affair. The judge, in delivering sentence, explained that my crime, being serious, warranted twenty years in the penitentiary; but that he would reduce the sentence to fifteen years, because he could not believe a young man with my kind and sympathetic face could be a dangerous felon.

The governor of the state paused in his reading and wiped his glasses. From the halls and ante-rooms he could hear the buz-buzz-buzz of the talkers, swarming outside as though anxious to enter and sting him to death. He sighed and continued to read:

So they took me to Ansen Penitentiary, dressed me in stripes, shaved my hair and proceeded to "punish" me. And, Mr. Governor, you can't imagine how blissful it was! For the first time in my life I was in an atmosphere of peace, of silence, of common sense. Two or three thousand men, each with his fad, his ego, his ingrowing garrulity held in abeyance,

going through the routine of the day under a strict discipline of silence. If some talkative old felon, unable to control his tongue, made conversation with the guards or whispered to his gang-mate on the way to the rock pile, he was whipped or thrown in a dark cell.

The place was heaven to me. During the long, un-

broken hours in my solitary cell, or working in the shops at some monotonous labor, I got a chance to grow acquainted with myself. You cannot imagine what a delightful fellow I found myself to be—a fellow of infinite jest, a raconteur, a poet, a cut-up. I had learned a great deal of philosophy, seen an infinite number of interesting things here and there which I had never been able to speak of before during my life among the egoists. Now I told them to myself with immense understanding. It was a rare companionship we enjoyed, myself and I.



"I like your nerve," said Lorenzo; "aint this a free country? Aint I gotta right to free speech?"

Before going to prison I had always wanted a chance to write verse and essays expressing my view of life; but I had been forever prevented by the incessant clamor of voices in my ears. But in prison I find infinite leisure to develop my genius, if I have any. Did it ever occur to you what a blessing jail is to a literary man? I have composed a book of essays and another of sonnets, which I have asked the chaplain to send to you in case I—

But my prison life was not all pleasure. On certain set days we prisoners were permitted to exercise in the yard, mingling together with more or less freedom and conversing in low tones. My fellow convicts, quick to note the sympathetic expression of my countenance, singled me out with the old, familiar light in their faded eyes. I shuddered. They had discovered in me a good listener. If there wandered in their pack one garrulous felon with a particularly prosy list of crimes to his credit, it was he who made for me and spoiled my hour of exercise with his creaking prison voice.

Another discordant fact broke the even tenor of my dream. After twenty months' sojourn in Ansen Penitentiary, the superintendent began taking notice of my good behavior and chose me, among others, to serve as "trustee." Due to my superior mentality, I was given a job among the convict clerks in the prison office. I served as an accountant, and on the stool next mine sat a talkative forger who had been an actor in his day. He was intolerable. He idolized himself, and all conversational roads led selfward. Reminiscence gushed from him like water from a pump. For weeks I listened with my weak, martyred smile, till one day I fancied I could trace in his pasty features a distinct resemblance to Lorenzo McNulty. With a scream I seized my ledger and smote him briskly in the chest.

As punishment, I was restored to my stripes and spent a blissful month in solitary confinement. The authorities thought to disgrace me further by again reducing me to the rank and file. I was permitted to exercise in the yard under strict surveillance, not being allowed a

word with anyone. Nothing could have suited me better.

My father and mother being dead, no one called on me except my Aunt Esther, who came once a year and afflicted me intensely with her kindness. She had given up Spiritualism for Theosophy and did her best to convert me to the Lotos Cult during the short time allotted her. After her tenth visit, my hair began to show grey over the ears. As the years crept by, Aunt Esther's visits had the effect of increasing my dread of the day when I must quit this haven and step forth once more into the world of words.

My years flew all too swiftly, and the time drew near when I must be free. Nearer and nearer approached the dreaded day. It was now but four months off. My head began to ache with anticipation, my ears, long used to the sweets of cloistered quietude, buzzed already with imagined voices prating emptily of baseball, politics, theories, dressmaking, automobiles. The world out there seemed populated with ogre shapes of Lorenzo McNultys and Aunt Esthers, training their voices to overwhelm me, banished forever from my happy jail.

I lost sleep and appetite; I began failing in weight. For hours I tossed upon my coarse prison bed, trying to devise some plan which would prolong my stay in this sanctuary.

A means of gaining my end was offered me in a strange way, entirely by accident. There was a tough old convict, a life term, known among the inmates as Pat the Pill. He was the type of criminal you see caricatured in the comic papers—ape-like skull, pig eyes, bulldog jaw. One day during our promenade in the prison yard I saw Pat drop a chip of wood in attempting to pass it to a companion. I picked it up and smuggled it under my blouse. That night in my cell I examined the fragment and found scratched upon one side the date "April 3." I at once scented the plot—jail delivery.

Pat the Pill had always yearned to draw me into conversation, so the next time I passed him in the yard I permitted him to approach.

"Yer on!" he grunted, speaking out of the corner of his mouth. "I seen y' pick

it up. If ye snitch on us, I'll croak yez."

"I wont snitch," I assured him, thinking meanwhile of my plan. "I'm with you—what's the game?"

In his prison *patois* he explained briefly that on the following night twenty-seven prisoners in our corridor were planning to rush the guard and escape. At the moment the official stepped to the switch nearest Pat's cell and turned to shoot the electric bolt, automatically closing all the cells in the row, Pat was to overcome him and the prisoners were to stampede. I warned Pat against murdering the man, as I foresaw the consequences; but he assured me he knew a trick of jiu-jitsu which would stretch the guard unconscious without doing him serious injury.

And that was how I added myself to the plot.

Knowing my intense desire to remain permanently in prison, your excellency, you may be astonished at the readiness with which I concurred to the rascal's plans. But my scheme was deeper than you think, and working toward my desired result. In a word, I realized that in attempting to escape, I would be committing an offense which would effectually prolong my stay in Ansen Penitentiary. I was enlightened enough to realize that not one in ten thousand escaping criminals ever attain their freedom; that they are usually apprehended inside the prison confines and a substantial extension added to their sentences. It was this extension of sentence I was looking for.

The night set for the jail delivery arrived. The men had been strange and sullen all day and Pat the Pill was more pasty-faced than usual. The

very moment of the guard's approach was known to all of us. Pat was to strike the blow.

A man's blue cap showed quietly down the corridor directly in front of Pat's cell. It was the guard. He turned his back and began fumbling with the switch just as the wiry old convict plunged from his cage like a deadly tiger and pinned his man to the concrete floor. Two dozen convicts started timidly from their cells,

but bobbed suddenly back when the unexpected happened—for apparently Pat's jiu-jitsu didn't take, and the guard, far from senseless, roared amain, waking

the echoes and starting hurrying footsteps along the halls. Our fellow conspirators now cowering behind the bars, there were only three of us exposed in the corridor, myself and Pat and a tall consumptive whom they called Mouse

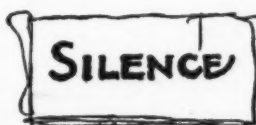
Face. It was all in a minute.

The guard began struggling and suddenly something flashed in Pat's hand and he brought it down ten or twelve times on the man's chest and abdomen—a table-spoon with the handle ground to a feather edge.

Then the guards came, a dozen of them, and began firing on us. Pat keeled forward, a hole in his shaved head. The tall Mouse Face fell writhing like an angle-worm. I got it twice in the right leg.

And that's all, your excellency. I didn't kill the guard; I didn't plan the jail delivery. And when you consider the fact that I acted as I did to stay *in*, not to get *out*, I think you may agree with my attorney that I come under the head of Special Case.

Ave, Governor! *Morituri te salutamus!* If you say "Thumbs down," I'll take



The prison was Heaven to me.



I don't want to die. The chaplain tells me that when it's all over, my spirit will rove free among millions of happy souls. I dislike the idea. I should miss my prison.

your decision with that weak, agreeable smile that has always worked me ill. But I don't want to die. The chaplain tells me that when it's all over, my spirit will rove free among millions of happy souls. I dislike the idea. I should miss my prison.

The governor pulled his fat gold watch from his fat white waistcoat and consulted it thoughtfully, as though the hour hand, pointing to the numeral IV, would stand as some official decision. Outside, the clamor of his waiting constituents seemed to become more and more insistent; so was his headache. He pushed the button summoning his secretary.

"Is that lawyer Higgins still out there?" he asked.

"Yes, Governor," said the secretary reproachfully, "and the Adulteration

League committee is still waiting, getting madder and madder."

"Well," sighed the governor, "you can tell Mr. Higgins that I'll grant his client what he wants more than anything else on earth—life imprisonment."

The door opened and the impatient committee came stampeding in, all talking at once, pouring arguments into his pained ears and shaking his weary hands. He assumed with difficulty his stoical, his famous smile, the smile that had won constituents and inspired even bashful men to floods of eloquence.

"Gov'nor," said their spokesman excitedly, "if you put this through, as sure as shootin' we'll send you up for another term!"

"To jail?" asked the executive hopefully, wanly.

And the committee, not seeing the point, went right on talking.

It Is Better To Have Lived *and* Learned



HARRIS
MERTON
LYON

ILLUSTRATED BY WILL GREFE

IF I were only clever enough I certainly would begin this story with some snappy, slangy tag of philosophy; or some wild, free burst of smart moralizing; or some neat epigram calling the reader names. The thing need not necessarily have any meaning. It need not have anything to do with my story. It really ought to be unintelligible, a mere appendix paragraformis.

But it honestly ought to be put here, according to the code. It ought to be put here because it would have the appearance, greatly to be desired nowadays, of flippancy - and - philosophy. Pronounce that rapidly. You get an effect like flip-floppancy. Flip-floppancy is a carefully cultivated talent in our story-telling today. You must—if you are of Our School, which is the School of Those-Upon-Whom-the-O. Henry-Mantle-Has-Fallen—you positively must begin with a flip paragraph. If you can end with a flop, so much the better.

For instance, I ought to begin something like this:

"Man should have nothing to do with mood. There should be no such word in his lexicon. Or rather, it should merely be the past participle of what the cow did."

Then, having proved that I was right active mentally and had got at least one of the rules of the *Art Nouveau Americain* down pat, I should move on to my story. Not being clever, I dodge the flip-floppancy dodge, and go ahead.

The man of interest in this story is named P. Dolphin Toy. He distinctly is not a hero. If anything, he is that well-known domesticated European ruminant, *Capra hircus*; or, simply, goat.

P. Dolphin Toy is now the very efficient advertisement writer in the J. Ogden Stein Agency. It is his snappy pen which tells you in the newspapers that your old jonesy pipe will not blister your tongue if you tune up old jonesy with Shanghai Shag.

But at the time under chronicle Mr. Toy was a dramatist, or a playwright, or whatever you call such people. He was then six years younger. Even in New York one can learn things in six years. For instance, Mr. Toy has learned not to kill himself. This, you may say—seeing that he was a dramatist or a playwright—is wisdom of doubtful value. Still, at least it conduces to longevity and snappy advertisements.

Follows the narrative of how Mr. Toy learned not to kill himself.

On a September night of quality, chill, and charm, Mr. Toy walked moodily into an obscure hotel on Third Avenue and rented a room. The room was on the second floor. In the right hip pocket of Mr. Toy's light summer trousers there reposed a pearl-handled bit of antique Etruscan jewelry which Mr. Toy considered to be a revolver. As Mr. Toy entered his room he glanced at the lighting arrangement and noted with a gloomy joy which would have done credit to a Swedish metaphysical philosopher that there was a fine, strong supply of gas flowing. So far, so good.

Mr. Toy locked his door, drew a chair over to the window, sat down, placed his head in his hands and fell into a melancholy review of his life. As, first or last, we have all of us made a like solemn review of ourselves, we may boil down the thoughts of Mr. Toy. Says the philosopher: *Il faut faire attention à ne pas gâter la vie.* Certainly. One must take care not to spoil one's life. Mr. Toy had neglected to take such care. In brief, Mr. Toy had written ten unsuccessful plays and had lost the love—and whereabouts—of a trusting girl.

Mr. Toy now gazed at the alpha and omega of his latter affair. Alpha read:

Oh, I was so lonely, so lonely, so lonely until I met you, Dolphie. The days were weary dreams. I felt as if the flesh had dropped away from me; as if I were dead; as if I were a shadow in a world of shadows! Why did I have to suffer so? Oh, when I think of what I suffered.... what my poor little lonely soul suffered! But now my soul is free, light as air, free as the wind, since I have known you. I can bear anything now. I can even work. My savior!

Clarys.

And omega, which had come a week ago, upon the intelligence that his tenth play was a failure:

You have betrayed my trust—the trust of a lonely girl. I am going away. You shall never see me more.

C.

Mr. Toy read them and sighed. Suddenly he bethought himself of the river. The river was more poetical. There would be no sordid remains. He would be carried out to sea. He recalled Tennyson's lines about the sunset and the evening star. "It is a shame I didn't think of this at sunset," he muttered. Then he reflected that people would have been apt to observe him at sunset. It was better done in the dark.

He arose wearily and went out, choosing a direction toward the river which carried him up through Central Park.

Well did he remember the occasion of that first note from Clarys. (Pronounced the same as Clarice).

Two months before, he had dined in an Italian restaurant on West Fortieth Street. The *padrone* had shown him out into the back yard. "It is cooler here." Also the darkness veiled the food. There was only one chair not occupied. It was at a very small table, remote. A young lady sat alone at this table. She was petite, golden-haired, blue-eyed. But the eyes did not laugh. They were wistful. They smote him.

He remembered to this, his dying day, his first words. They were: "Pardon me, Miss, would you like some of my roquefort dressing on your salad? You see—you squash the roquefort with your fork—thus—and pour some of this chemical claret—thus—and—"

"Oh, thanks awfully," she had murmured, her great, sad eyes swimming in liquid gratitude. He thought at once that she might be going to weep for joy.

Then he had remarked: "Aren't the mosquitoes fierce?"

And she had nodded at him dumbly, the pain still apparent in those stricken eyes; and then she had replied, in her cool, cheery voice: "And it is so dark. The sky hovers so darkly. It makes one so very lonely."

He was thrilled. "Are you lonely, too?"



"It would be improper upon so short an acquaintance," said she.
"We are two waifs," he protested. "The great city cares
nothing for us. Let us care for each other."

How fortunate that we should meet. I also am lonely. I sometimes think I shall go mad for want of companionship in this great, cruel, cold-hearted city."

She shrank at the words.

"Oh, do not misunderstand me," he hastened on. "I am not trying to thrust myself upon you. Do me the justice, at least, not to consider me that sort of man. I have very little to do with women. I really shun their society. You see, I am a dramatist."

"A successful one, I suppose," she murmured.

"No, unfortunately."

"Ah, that accounts for it." She looked at him hauntingly. "I, too, am by way of being of the stage."

"Isn't that fine!" exclaimed Mr. Toy.

"I have come here to perfect my art."

"Pardon me?"

"The art of acting."

"An actress! Perhaps you can get one of my plays accepted for you," he said eagerly. "There is a tragedy—'Wife or Woman?'—in which the anguished mother—"

"I am too small and too light for tragedy."

"Then I have a farce-comedy—'Rosalie Romps'—"

"Not yet. Not—not yet," she sighed, the mournful note again dominating her voice, and her large eyes, now with deep purple shadows in them, seeming even more melancholy than before. "I am still unfortunate. Day after day I haunt the offices of the managers, dragging myself wearily up and down millions of stairs. Up and down. Up and down. And always discouraged, and always lonely—so lonely—"

Mr. Toy had intended beginning a new musical comedy that night—a very neat idea of a comical old king and his beautiful daughter on a remote island—but he was so entranced at finding so charming a young person (she was dressed in a tight-fitting mineral blue satin) that he stammeringly proposed the theatre and a bite to eat afterward.

For once, a ray of happiness passed over his dainty companion's visage. But she demurred.

"It would be improper upon so short an acquaintance," said she.

He protested. "We two are waifs. The great city cares nothing for us. Let us care for each other."

"But—you are not married? Nor engaged?"

"Haven't I just told you I never had anything to do with women in my life—except believe them?"

"You are a hero," she said, brightly. And they went to see Jimmie Powers.

Two days later he received the note marked Exhibit Alpha above. There followed delightful summer days of sauntering in the park; evenings on roof gardens; midnight suppers on still other roof gardens. Their friendship ripened. Mr. Toy had come to consider, even, that his courtship had begun. Clarys now trusted him fully. She even permitted him to make her small loans of cash wherewith to pay her board and room bill; for she was all alone in New York, her own funds had slowly been eaten up, and her poor mother in Savannah, Georgia—for Clarys came of a prominent slave-owning Southern family which had been impoverished by the war—could no longer help her. It was impossible for her to get theatrical employment in the summer time. At first she had absolutely refused Mr. Toy's offers of financial assistance. Later, however, when convinced of the honesty of his intentions, she had permitted the loans.

"I really must exist somehow until autumn," she had explained. "Then I am sure I can get employment."

"You must never, never leave New York, though," he had protested.

"Why?"

"Because. Because"—he became bold—"I have made up my mind I will wipe that look of pain out of your eyes."

She gazed at him with the old, aching expression.

"Oh, Dolph," she sighed over her lobster. Clarys had become fond of lobster.

"If I never do anything else, I will bring joy into those dear blue eyes. I may be a failure as a playwright—"

"Oh, Dolph," she remonstrated.

"Well, as a dramatist then. But this much I will accomplish. I will lighten the life of at least one human being. The world shall be the sweeter for you from your having known me."

Well. And here was the Exhibit Omega, after seven weeks of joy: "You have betrayed my trust—the trust of a lonely girl. I am going away. You shall never see me more."

As Mr. Toy, in his light summer suit, trudged down West 65th Street toward the pier, he racked his brains for the reason of her going. How had he hurt her? He bemoaned the fact that he had never understood women. Perhaps some brutal, chance remark he had made had wounded her; she was so delicate, so supersensitive, so timid, so really afraid of the world of men. Perhaps she had felt that subtle aura of failure which he himself knew surrounded him. She had always believed in him, in his certain success. That was it! He had not only failed in the eyes of the world; he had failed in her eyes. It was in *that* way that he had betrayed her trust—the trust of a lonely girl depending on a strong man to be her shield against a cruel world. And he had not been strong; he had proved himself a weakling.

That was it. Now he began to understand the intricacies—those wonderful, subtle intricacies—of the feminine mind. She was too kind, too gentle to come out boldly and tell him that by writing one failure after another he had slowly worn down her faith and hope and trust.

If he had only been able to find her! To explain; to tell her that ten failures were nothing, if she would but believe in him again. He had been on the point of trying for the \$10,000 prize grand opera. But he could not find her. She had moved without leaving an address. For five long, weary days he had exhausted himself in the search. He had visited the old places, as many as he could afford to enter, for he had had only ten dollars left, after giving her thirty. With his last dollar he had rented the room in the cheap hotel: the combination of ten failures, the loss of her, and no money was too much. He had completely spoiled his life.

Mr. Toy, who was long and lean, approached the end of the pier by stooping in the lee of a lumber pile, and scudding on tiptoe. His idea was to make a running jump of it. But he was unfortunate. As he reached the edge, and had

opened his mouth to say "Good-by, stupid world," his toe caught in a warped plank and he fell overboard on his side. The water in these docks is none too clean. It so happened his mouth was by a mischance still open to deliver his passionate adieu. The effect was abominable. It caused him to thrash out wildly with his long arms. This maintained him half afloat, and a dock tender caught him in the seat of the trousers with a boat-hook. In spite of his protestations, he was dragged up, and the dockman, being Irish, swore at him while saving him.

The whole nauseating affair took but a minute or two. Mr. Toy, with intense chagrin, found himself the center of a small crowd. Some one handed the dockman a bottle of bad whiskey—that is, not bad whiskey, but the kind that is sold along shore fronts all over the world. Mr. Toy was forced to drink a gulp of it.

"Are you all right?" asked a curious voice.

Mr. Toy turned scornfully on his heel and started away.

"If you're going uptown," suggested the voice, "you'd better use your coat to cover the seat of your pants."

Realizing that the employment of the boat-hook had justified the aptness of this coarse remark, Mr. Toy followed the suggestion.

Picking up a phrase to save time, we will say that rage and shame struggled for the mastery in Mr. Toy's bosom. "A man's most noble and desperate act," said Mr. Toy to himself through gritted teeth, "to be thus foiled, turned to naught, made light of by a gang of low roustabouts. This is the fashion in which the world soils everything. To take a sublime sacrifice such as mine and wallow it in the—in the flotsam of a stinking dock." His despair, his sense of his own worthlessness, his chagrin at his bungling, his positive hate of the entire insensate world grew upon him with every step.

Realizing the embarrassing condition of his clothing, he dodged into the park to avoid the people in the streets.

Once in the park, he glared mutinously around. "I will *not* submit," he swore. "I will *not* be saved." He spied



"Come now," said the officer. "this is no place to sleep."
"Disgusting," said Mr. Toy.
"Get fresh with me, and I'll run you in," said the officer.
by way of repartee.

a bench under a dark shrub. Down he sat upon it. Feverishly he jerked out the antique Etruscan piece of jewelry with the pearl handle. He put the barrel of this mechanism against his temple. "This time I *will* die," he hissed. "Good-by, stupid world." He pulled the trigger.

Partly because the specimen of *bi-jouterie* was already rusted with age, partly because it was soaked with water, the affair refused to explode.

The unfortunate man lay back gasping after his effort, this time utterly unnerved. Also he was shaking with the chill, the chill of a charming October night, which augmented the chill of the water.

An officer approached. "Come now," said the officer. "Move on. This is no place to go to sleep."

"Disgusting," murmured Mr. Toy.

"What'd you say?"

Mr. Toy leaped to his feet and shouted: "'Disgusting!' I said. 'Damnably and filthily disgusting.'" He walked rapidly away.

"Get fresh with me and I'll run you in," yelled the officer, by way of repartee. Mr. Toy kept on walking.

There was nothing for it except the hotel room and the gas. He broke into a run, his coat slapping at his heels as he held it behind him. Mr. Toy afforded quite a sensation as he went down Third Avenue. His lip curled in scorn, as the copybook says. But nobody noticed that. He did not stay long enough in one place for so subtle an expression as contempt of the universe to be noted.

Cautiously approaching his hotel from a side street he made his way in through the barroom door, dodged the clerk's desk and crept upstairs. He let himself in with a moist key. He shut the window. He plugged up the keyhole. He divested himself of his dripping clothes, and with teeth chattering, crawled into bed. Then he remembered he had forgotten to turn on the gas. He arose and did so.

As he reclined again on the coverlet, he could smell the deadly nitrogen engulfing him. At last it became positively choking. While he could still articulate the words, he moaned: "Good-by, stupid world." Then he fell asleep.

As he fell asleep there was a feminine shriek from the room above. Mr. Toy had overlooked the fact that the steam-pipe which ran from basement to roof pierced each floor and each ceiling with a generous hole. The gas, escaping, had found this outlet. The feminine shriek was notification that the lodger above had sensed the unusual—in that locality, the significant—odor. But, also, feminine shrieks were common in that locality. Wherefore, it was some time before the lady above could attract attention. After she had attracted attention she promptly fainted. More time was wasted.

At last, after an excruciating period had elapsed, the door of Mr. Toy's room was broken in, and he was bundled off, unconscious, to the hospital.

The doctor who had attended with the ambulance was requested to step upstairs and administer to a lady who had been overcome.

It was five days later that Mr. Toy, still very unfit and with a peculiar dizziness agitating him, was discharged from the hospital.

The balmy air of a late October day, giving hint of an Indian summer, pervaded the streets. The time was five in the afternoon. Mr. Toy wobbled along the sidewalk, communing with himself. But his communications were of the fitful kind, which come and go and yet leave everything unsaid. His one overwhelming feeling was that of nausea; moreover, of gaseous nausea. He could taste gas, smell gas everywhere, in everything, all the time.

His clothes were rumpled as if he had been sleeping in them. Hospitals always rumple your clothing. He felt supremely disgusted; also he felt in his pocket. He found just forty cents.

He reflected on his lot as a dramatist. Rather, he reflected on the old days when he had been a dramatist, days that had passed forever. He remembered that at five o'clock in those days, he and Clarys had always repaired to a cosmopolitan sort of place on Fifth Avenue and Twenty-sixth street where the gay people of the town gathered before dinner to have an *apéritif*. It was quite a Parisian hang-out; marble-topped tables, leather-cushioned seats along the

walls, waiters who could understand almost any French.

A great longing came over the sickly, rumpled man to go in there and have a drink. He had forgotten what price they charged for an *Amer Picon* with grenadine, but the longing was so intense and so imperative that he determined to go in there and have it—even if they sent him back to the hospital as a result.

He slid in modestly and with downcast eyes took a seat near the Broadway door. The waiter actually recognized him, spoke to him decently, and brought him the *Amer*. He gazed into its prune-colored depths and a great comfort seized him.

This comfort came from the fact that he was still in the land of the living and could sit here and sip this prune-colored mixture. This comfort began at his toes and oozed up into his stomach and from there on up into his head. Then it started flowing back again. It got as far as his heart, when it turned into ice-water and froze his auricle, ventricle and pericardium.

Because behind him, her back to his back, sat Clarys. He knew her voice. He did not dare turn. He sat there, marble, leaning on the marble table.

"To think of finding you up here, Arthur!" said the cool, sad accents. "Why, I didn't know you had left Savannah. And you're a doctor now! And you found me in that odd, that peculiar way!"

The doctor laughed. "What, by the way, were you doing down in that miserable hotel?"

Mr. Toy had little need to see those pained blue eyes. He knew that deep hurt which lay in them like purple shadows on light blue waters. "Oh, Arthur, life has been a weary, weary thing for me. I came to New York to perfect my art—the art of acting, you know. But everything has gone against me. I could get no work. I had only a little money—only thirty dollars—so I—I had to live cheaply."

"You poor girl, you," said Arthur.

"And I have been lonely, so lonely."

Arthur evidently braced himself proudly. "No wonder. In a hole like

that, with fools trying to asphyxiate themselves under you every night. But, there. Don't worry. I've found you."

She sighed wearily. "Oh, but this living along from hand to mouth, with no money, and not knowing where the next dollar is coming from!"

"There, there," replied Arthur. "You've been cooped up too long. What you need is to be taken places—the roof gardens, motor trips. Eat a lobster once; that'll cheer you up."

She shuddered. Mr. Toy could feel the shudder, through the back of his chair. "Oh, Arthur! Those weary, weary days. They were just like dreams. Honestly, I felt as if the flesh had dropped away from me—as if I were dead—as if I were a shadow in a world of shadows! Oh, when I think of what I have suffered! What my poor little lonely soul has suffered!"

"Don't look at me so pitifully, Clarys," said Arthur, sharply. Then softly: "There, there, I thought you were going to cry. Don't do it here. People might think you'd had too much."

Her cool, somber voice answered: "Oh, thank Heaven, I have found you. I can bear anything now; now that I have a friend. . . ."

"I'm glad I found you, little girl," said Arthur, bracingly. "To tell the truth, I'm darned lonely in this big old town. Of course, I've got my work and that keeps me pretty busy. But what I want is some interest outside my work. Now, you and I can pal together here. I remember your mother is in no fix to help you. Hang it, girlie, you've got to let me help you."

She seemed to demur.

"What's the matter?" he asked.

"Arthur—can—can I trust you?"

He exploded. "Of course you can. What's the matter with you? Don't I know your people? What do you think I am? I hope you don't think I'm *that* sort of a man. As a matter of fact, I don't know much about women. Never had much to do with them."

A long silence. She was evidently fixing her pained eyes upon him.

"If you knew what I have suffered, Arthur," she began. "But now,"—her voice was very full of quiverings—"now



Mr. Toy had little need to see those pained blue eyes. He knew the deep hurt which lay in them like purple shadows on light blue waters.

I feel free, light as air, free as the wind—since I have met you again."

"Well," said Arthur practically, "the first thing for you to do is get out of that rotten hotel and into a decent place to live. Those suicides will get on your nerves for certain down there in that place."

"That poor man," cooed Clarys. "Do you suppose he will try to do it again?"

"Oh, no," replied the doctor. "Never. All that sort of thing makes a man pretty sick at his stomach."

Mr. P. Dolphin Toy put on his hat and walked out. "I should say it does," he remarked to Broadway.

The Quitter

by

EDWARD
LYELL FOX

Author of "Everybody Up," "Mercuries Who Race," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY HIBBERD V. B. KLINE

INTO remote Calgary a newspaper had come. The *Boston Globe* it was, crumpled and torn, yellowish in damp spots, smudged with run ink—a vagrant cast down beside the tracks. Days before, some passenger had thrown it from the observation platform of the Vancouver Express—thrown it when the engine, hot with thirst, had stopped at a lonely tank in the bush. And then the train had rumbled on through miles of undergrown woods, until, rattling across a trestle, it left the bush far behind and entered the haunts of men.

Not so very long after, a wheezy handcar followed the tracks that the express had followed. From the east it came, from down near Green Hole, where they were leveling for a new "cut-off" through the bush. And like the Express, it stopped at the lonely tank. Not because the engine was hot and thirsty, for handcars have no engines; rather because the three men it bore were parched and wanted water.

Only rarely did the newspapers come to the *C. & P.* engineers in Calgary—very rarely, only when a bundle of them, weeks old, was dropped off with the mail



at the supply station. So when the three men saw the faded *Globe* they became excited—excited like children who have been given something not ex-

pected. The oldest of them, Blake, Boss Engineer of the cut-off job, obtaining possession, sat down on a small boulder, with the others looking over his shoulder.

"Turn to the sporting page," suggested Metcalf, who had played end at Harvard.

Blake, remembering it was November, about the time Yale was getting ready to go down to the Stadium, did as he was bidden.

"Great game, football," he remarked, turning to Gray, the youngest of the engineers, a man who had a way of saying little.

"Think so?" said Gray.

"Think! I know!" exclaimed the Boss.

"Great in what way?" persisted Gray.

"Why it builds a man up," declared the Boss. "Stiffens his body, his backbone. Makes him capable of enduring fatigue and hardship!"

And jumping to his feet, Blake breathed deeply of the keen autumn air. To him in that Calgary wilderness had

come a Call. His cheeks flushed; his eyes glowed. There was a swelling of his chest. The Spirit of the Game was on him again. Abruptly he turned on Gray.

"Well," he demanded. "How about it? Doesn't football harden your body?"

"More than that," said Gray quietly. "It hardens you morally. Changes your character. Why, I've even known it to change a man's life!"

And then he told them the story of Jim Walton, who, he said, he had known as a college quarterback.

The town of Lankin (began Gray) is in the south-eastern corner of the state of Michigan. I don't suppose you've ever heard of it or its college. In the seventies, a man named Allen founded the college and gave it his name. Among the early students was a Frank Walton, whose father was supposed to have founded the settlement from which the town grew. Well, Walton made a wonderful record as a student, did wonders for the college, was hero-worshiped and all that sort of thing. And his record after graduation was just as good. As generous as he was rich, he threw himself into the task of building up Allen College. He outfitted classrooms, then buildings. He established scholarships, professorships—in fact, did everything that one could have done for the place. In time the name Walton became the best liked tradition of Allen. It stood for everything that was big-hearted and generous and noble.



Before continuing, Gray paused to moisten the tip of the cigarette he had rolled.

"But what has that to do with football?" remarked Metcalf, who did not like Gray.

"Everything," snapped Gray, and he went on.

Well, by and by athletics began to

take hold at Allen. First, it was baseball; then football. And at every game, down in the front row of the cheering section would be old man Walton, now beginning to gray a bit around the edges of his hair, now with the lines of his face deepening, but as ruddy and as full spirited as ever. More, he began to bring a little boy to the games with him—his son. There through the long afternoons they sat, day after day, rejoicing or growing glum as the fortunes of Allen rose or fell. For many years it was this way—all the time the boy was attending the town grammar school. And always old Walton drummed into the boy the spirit of Allen—the spirit to fight, to play the game fairly; but always to play it hard.

Eventually, the youngster went away to the preparatory school that was to prepare him for Allen.

"Make the team," was the way old Walton said good-by at the train. "Make the football team. There's more fight in it!"

And young Allen did make the team. He made it the second year and played thereafter until it was time to go to college. Also, the folks in Lankin began to hear great tales of him. How he had developed into a remarkable kicker; how he was punting fifty and sixty yards—better than anything the middle West had seen since the days of Herschberger or O'Dea. So to the townspeople he became a hero—the hero son of old hero Walton. Indeed, he promised to outdo his father when the time came to enter Allen. And the heart of old Walton was glad within him. The boy was a fighter—a fighter such as was hatched and bred at Allen.

There came other stories of him too. Only few knew them and they never went beyond the coach's quarters on the campus. One day before college closed in June, Morrison, Captain-elect of the eleven, sought out the coach, and said:

"Well, how do you think Walton will be next fall?"

Coach Mason, a wide-shouldered, heavy-chested man, perhaps thirty, with deep set brown eyes, looked thoughtful.

"Don't know," he said carefully. "He reminds me of a fellow we had at Penn."

(Mason had captained the University of Pennsylvania eleven that beat Harvard.)

"What do you mean?" asked Morrison, surprised. "Don't you think he'll strengthen us? Why, I've seen him punt sixty yards time and again."

"In scrimmage?" asked the coach quickly.

"No—o," admitted Morrison. "Why do you ask?"

"Merely to pave the way for a remark," said the coach, dryly, "that a man who can kick sixty yards in practice and not in a game is yellow. And I've never seen Walton kick over thirty in a game."

"But Walton isn't yellow," protested Morrison. "Why his father—"

"What's the old man got to do with him?" interrupted Mason, and his eyes narrowed.

"Why, everybody knows, that—that—" faltered Morrison.

"Everybody knows nothing," snapped the other. "I think Walton's yellow!"

September came and autumn began to change the countryside from green to old gold and red. On the campus the long, uncut grass was beginning to turn color. On the buildings, the ivy, growing in an ecstasy of madness, was dangling over the windows shutting out the light. In Old Queens a door creaked open and three freshmen, delighted with their reception from the spruce-looking registrar, issued forth. Early afternoon it was, and draining through the leaves the sunshine passed with a momentary flicker on all things. Up in the chapel cupola, a workmen moving the bell caused it to emit a low-toned ringing. It was all very soft, very tranquil, very indolent.

The last notes of the bell were still reverberating in a soft, hollow sound when through the east gate came Jim Walton. Lithe-limbed, he was moving along with the swift and effortless tread of an Indian when somebody called. It was one of the three freshmen. Walton turned.

"Going out for the team?" the freshman called.

"For quarter back," returned Walton, somewhat nettled at the question.

The fool freshman should have known

that a man with Walton's preparatory school record was regarded as Varsity without half trying.

"Don't know whether you'll make it or not," laughed the other. "That's the job I'm trying for."

"You," sneered Walton, and continued his walking.

Five minutes later he entered the gymnasium. He brushed through two sets of swinging doors, and, turning a corner, descended a flight of steps. At the bottom was a large room where other men, two and three years his seniors, were undressing. Along the walls ran rows of metal lockers and on the doors of each Walton saw the names that to Allen were the names of heroes—Drake-ly (he was the halfback who scored against Michigan last year), Millard (the giant tackle whose blocked kick beat Ames), Thomas, Reed, Morrison, all of them, beloved of town and college. As he hurried past, Morrison nodded pleasantly. Walton hoped the others had seen it.

Beyond was another room, barer, lower-ceilinged, and windowless, a place of smooth walls hung at either end with dusty gymnasium mats. It was the "Cage," where, in winter, the baseball team began playing. But now the football men had taken possession—a score of them, veterans of the varsity *squad* but never of the *team*. Men they were, who for two and three years had tried to 'make it,' and trying, failed. Here they dressed, quite by themselves, removed from the heroes in the locker rooms as effectually as they had long been removed from places on the team. Loyal, light-spirited men, each doing his little to build the eleven.

But Walton wondered at their light spirits. He wondered how he would feel, if at the end of two years he should find himself restricted to this very room—a failure in the shadow of the Team.

He was looking around now, recognizing faces. Over in a corner, one foot on the floor, the other teetering at the edge of a bench, Wallace was struggling with a broken shoe lace. Walton remembered him. Three years before, Wallace had brought to Allen an astonishing preparatory school record. Captain of the

eleven that had won the inter-scholastic championship, a brilliant half back, he seemed predestined for the Varsity. And now in his senior year, he was here with the substitutes—deadeast of all the dead hopes and lost causes that the room held. Walton remembered that the coach was supposed to have said that Wallace couldn't tackle any better than a child. A moment later he found himself worrying about his own tackling.

Then Walton noticed that the room was permeated with the odor of musk and mildew—a damp, depressing smell that had its source in a large packing case. This, the size of three ordinary trunks, was guarded over by the assistant manager—a silk-socked and striped-suited Cerberus who belonged to the Junior class. Always his eyes were roving around the room as if seeking some one, and when Walton came within their range, the little fellow spoke quickly.

"Here Freshman!" he exclaimed.

If Walton heard he made no sign. Secretly he was boiling—boiling inwardly with resentment and shame. The epithet, "freshman," spoken as if to an underling—applied to old Walton's son and before all these failures—angered him. For a moment he stood silently, indifferently, trying to be unaware of the manager's voice when it sounded again—a little louder, a little shorter.

"Freshman! Come here and get your suit!"

Walton imagined the others were watching him as he went forward. He felt their faces turned toward him and his own became hot with shame. Some one snickered. In the preparatory school they would have cheered. They always did when he went up to get his football togs at the beginning of the season. But here—

He bit on his under lip and frowned slightly. The manager handed him a uniform.

"Name and address?" he was asked.

Walton looked up in astonishment.

"You know," he said; "Walton, Frank Walton's son."

But the manager didn't know.

"What's your first name and the address?" he repeated curtly. "We have to keep some tab on this stuff."

And without another word, Walton told him. Ashamed of himself, of his impotency at not resenting the insinuation, doubtful of himself, of his football ability, Walton walked slowly to the furthest bench.

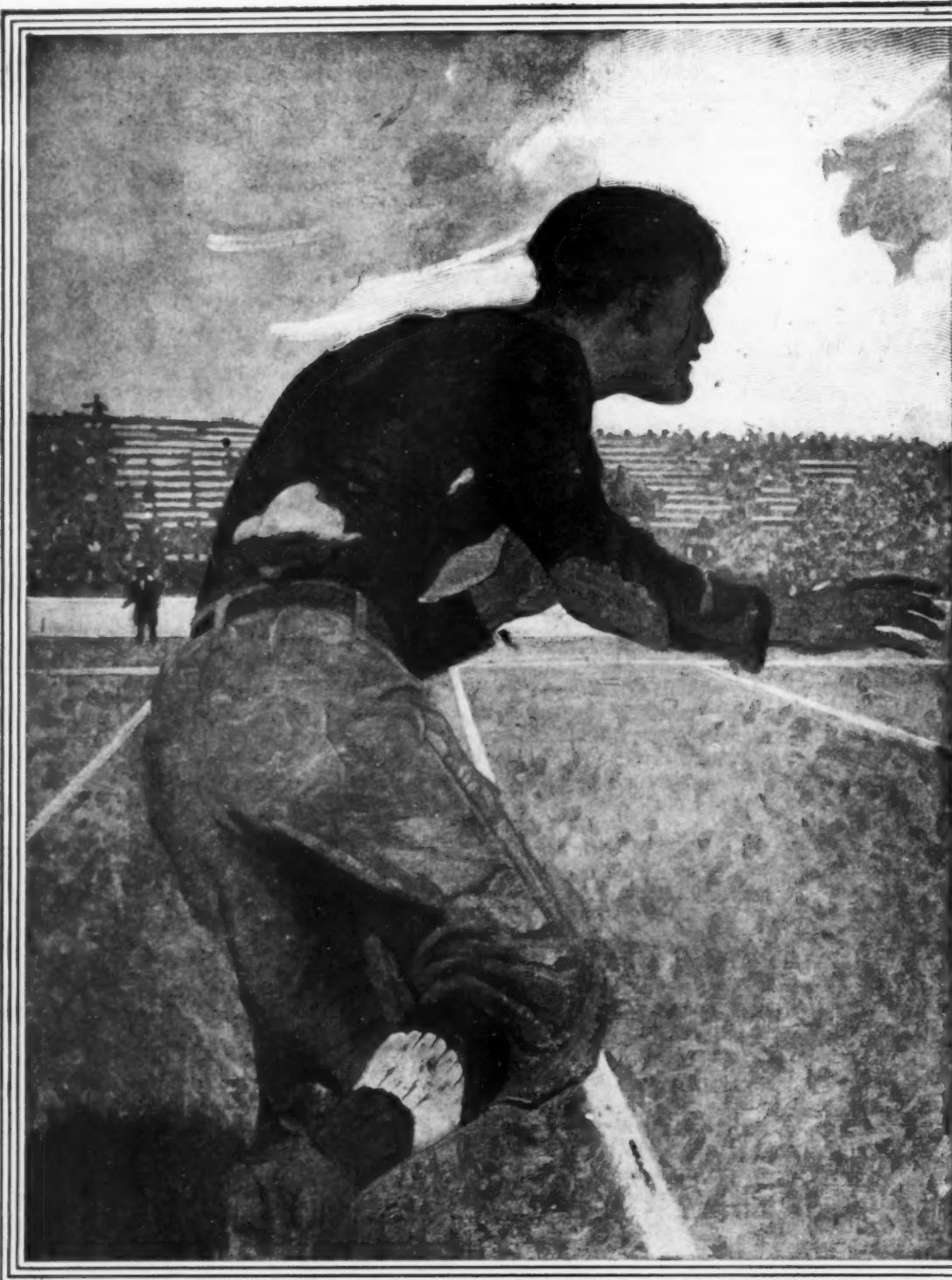
Sitting down in a listless sort of way he unwrapped the bundle that the manager had given him. Canvas football pants, patched on the hips, an old jersey with the elbows out, a pair of faded stockings and worn shoes rolled on the floor. Patched, old, faded, worn! At preparatory school he had been given the best of everything, new every season. His resentment deepened. Indeed by the time he had dressed, it had spread from the manager to the whole football administration at Allen. What kind of coach could he be who would let the captain of the preparatory school champions make his first appearance in college football so woefully equipped? What kind of captain was Morrison to permit such a thing? Morrison had seen him enter. He had nodded as Walton passed him on his way to the substitutes' room. The regular Varsity men had seen him, too. What could they be thinking of?

And so Walton brooded away until he heard some one calling that it was time to go to the field. Outside the gymnasium he found the squad gathered in the road. A moment later he was jogging toward the gridiron. Through a gate in the fence they trotted, behind the tall stands—things of wood and air, that raised their gray skeletons high above them—on down to the opening where Allen teams always made entrance to the field. Not a cheer greeted them. College had not opened. Everything was very bare, very cheerless. For the moment Walton felt very unimportant, very much alone.

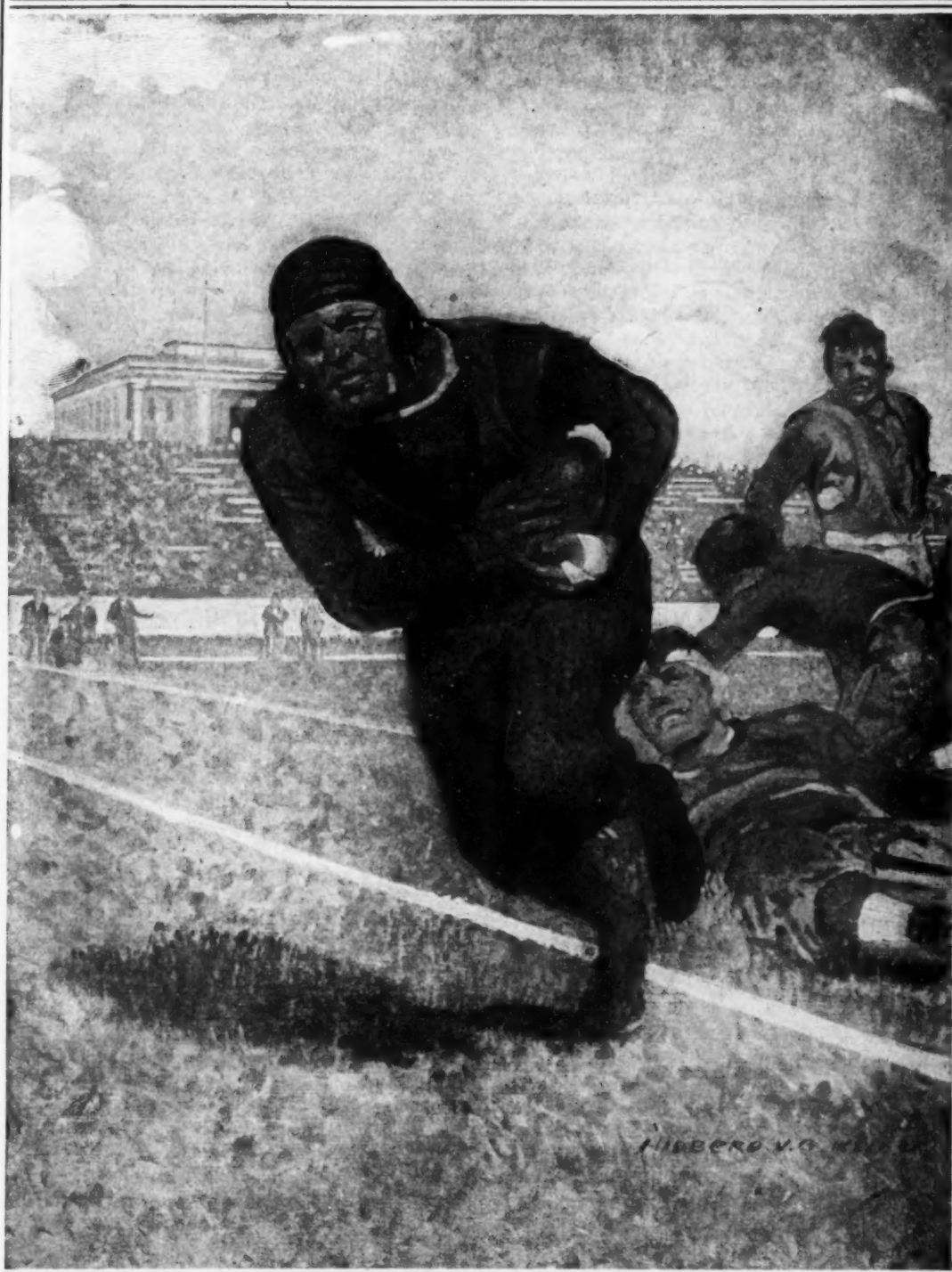
"Well, come on, Walton! Come on!" he suddenly heard the coach exclaim. "Do you need a special invitation?"

A moment later, flushing and muttering, he was holding a ball that the coach had flung him.

Down the field four of last year's substitute backs were deploying to catch the long punts that would come booming toward them. Walton watched Wallace—the failure—and he grinned.



Now a cry bursting from the Allen stands swept over the field to him. An awful cry it was, shrill and short,
ing down on him—the "Tornado"



the sound of many voices in alarm. And Walton knew that the full-back had failed, that Lessor was plung-
bearing toward the goal posts.

"I'll kick him a ball that he won't handle," Walton told himself. "I'll show that coach the way we kicked at preparatory school."

Then he took a quick step forward and flinging up his leg with the peculiar twist that imparted to the ball, a deceptive spinning, Walton crashed his foot into the blown leather. Straining to the utmost, he expected to see the ball mounting high, go shooting away sixty yards. Instead, it worried in a little arc and spinning crazily, swooped down not thirty-five yards from where he stood. And the coach who had come quietly, stood watching him without saying a word.

Again and again that afternoon Walton tried to get away a long punt but to no purpose. After that first blunder he went to pieces. Feeling the coach's steady gaze upon him, little by little losing faith in himself, afraid that he would fail utterly, Walton brought himself to a state of miserable incompetency. Weaker and weaker became his efforts until with a whimper in his voice he went to the coach and said:

"I can't kick because of these shoes. They hurt my feet. They're so sore that I can scarcely hobble around. May I get dressed?"

"Yes," said the coach coldly.

And as Walton walked from the field the coach's eyes that had begun to narrow almost closed. That night Mason went to the fraternity house where Captain Morrison lived.

"Well, to-day put the brand on one of them," he began abruptly.

"Who?" asked Morrison in surprise.

"On Walton, of course," said the coach. "I told you he'd quit."

And so a cloud descended early upon Walton's football career at Allen College. And as the days wore on and the bodies of the men became hardened, their muscles toughened by throwing themselves on the hard ground while diving for a rolling football, as they practiced crouching starts and ran lap after lap around the heavy field, the cloud around Walton darkened.

Finally scrimmaging began. The Varsity, still running unevenly, managed to crush a strong scrub in two ten-min-

ute halves. Then, little by little, the playing time was lengthened; the formations made more intricate; the actual combat more savage. And always Walton trailed along the side-lines; always he was with the substitutes—the third and fourth substitutes—the failures who had hoped vaguely that some day their chance would come. And he blamed it all upon the Coach. He felt that he had been discriminated against. He saw Nellis, the quarterback of the preparatory school which his team had beaten, given a post on the Varsity. He saw other men—men whom he had felt sorry for that first day in the substitutes' room, pass roughly over him and make the team. He saw the Coach retain a punter whose limit was forty yards. He saw the Coach smile grimly when time after time in practice he (Walton) sent the ball booming away fifty and sixty yards.

Once he had been called upon to punt for the Scrubs. It was down near the goal posts. The Scrubs were in danger. They must drive the ball far down the field. But failing miserably, with two Varsity linemen charging down upon him, Walton had kicked almost straight into the air. After that he had never been called upon again.

More than once it had been on his tongue to tell his father of the favoritism that the Coach was showing. One evening Frank Walton turned to his son and said:

"The town paper says you aren't playing the way you were in preparatory school. What's the matter?"

Young Walton hesitated.

"I don't know," he said finally.

Something told him that a whimper against the Allen football system wouldn't be received very sympathetically by his father. He remembered what he had been told about "fighting hard."

Now the Varsity began the season. A smaller college was met and beaten. One game followed another, the severity of the tests increasing as the schedule moved along. Now the team was running smoothly. The halts and hesitations, so noticeable in the early scrimmages, disappeared. Now the eleven men charged as one, evenly and powerfully, like the broad belt of some great ma-

chine. No longer did the Coach order men to fall on the ball. It was scrimmage, scrimmage, an hour of it each day—gruelling, buffeting scrimmage between a strong Scrub and a stronger Varsity. And through it all, Walton remained on the side-lines. Once in a while the coach gave him a ball and a substitute back and sent him down to a corner of the field to practice kicking.

It was surprising how well Walton kicked when he was alone. Always his punts whirled through the air fifty, sometimes sixty yards. Off by himself, with no burly tackles tearing down upon him, he regained the knack that had made him such a figure among the preparatory schools. The Coach must have seen it, but he gave him no chance.

Then the day of Allen's "big game" came along—the game with Belmont, objective point of the schedule and climax of the season. All the substitutes were told to report in uniform. Walton was included. But he didn't know that only the pleading of Captain Morrison had given him his seat on the bench.

"The fellow can kick," Morrison had said to the Coach the night before. "He is kicking like a fiend now. We might use him in an emergency."

"I wouldn't put him in unless all the others broke their legs," growled the Coach. "He's a quitter."

But Morrison, whose father had gone through Allen with Walton's father, didn't quite believe that.

With the early stages of the Allen-Belmont game that year we are not concerned. Before the home crowd, the towns-people, the college and friends of the college who had come from near and far, Allen was outplayed. Still the first half ended with no score. Time and again the green-sweatered backs of Belmont had plowed up the field, only to be balked in the last five yards. Time and again their powerful line had burst through and smashed the Allen formations in their tracks. One by one, figures wearing the blue of the home team were seen to come reeling from the mass of tangled men and limp toward the side lines. Alert to sense any weakening in his front, the Coach was quick to call them to the side lines.

And Walton, swathed in thick blankets, was surprised to find an awful feeling rising with him. At first he would have repelled it. Then he was glad—secretly, pitifully glad that he hadn't made the team and been called upon to take the battering that the Belmont giants were giving.

When the team withdrew to the field house to rest for the second half and the Coach began to speak, Walton wished himself up in the grand stand. It was a very dramatic speech, intense and savage, with none of the tricks of oratory, unless they were unconscious.

"Fight! Fight!" the Coach had finished by screaming. "Fight like devils!"

Then he had looked swiftly around the room and Walton had turned his head. He was afraid the Coach, seeing him, might tell him to take the injured Nellis' place at quarterback. When the teams returned to the field for the second half Walton took a seat on the bench as far away from the Coach as he could. Belmont looked too raw, too strong, too pitiless. He didn't care to be ground between their crushing formations. He covered that side of his face toward the Coach with the blanket.

A whistle blew; play began. Belmont, kicking off, drove the ball down to the Allen goal posts and buried the man who caught it under an avalanche of green jerseys. Nellis' voice sounded sharply, calling off the signals, and a moment later his little form was hidden by the massing men. Away over on the side lines Walton heard the heavy shock of bodies, a scraping of canvas, a rioting confusion of arms and legs that swayed, pitched forward and, falling, broke, flinging men on all sides as if they were suddenly shot from drawn springs. Then the whistle blew again and Walton saw Nellis lying very still. When they carried him to the side-lines they found his leg had been broken. Down the substitutes bench ran the news in hushed voices and when Walton heard it he began to tremble. What if he had been at quarterback instead of Nellis!

Then he saw that Captain Morrison was making some signs to the Coach. Impatient gestures they were, followed

by stubborn shakings of the head. Cautiously Walton turned to watch the Coach and as he did he saw him smile grimly.

"Walton!" called the Coach. "Take Nellis' place at quarterback. Captain will tell you what to do."

Scarcely knowing what he was doing, Walton tossed off his blanket and walked out on the field.

"Lucky dog!" he heard one of the substitutes say enviously.

"Fight 'em," called another.

Then he caught sight of his father sitting in the front row of the cheering section, beating out the booming Allen cheer with his gold-headed cane—beating it out, almost beside himself when he saw his son was going to play. And Walton, very white and frightened, wished himself a little boy sitting up beside his father and looking down as he had in years before.

He was surprised to find how easily, how from force of habit he called the signal to punt. Without thinking the numbers had come to him, and as they rang out Captain Morrison grinned approvingly. The next instant, he found himself some yards behind the center, waiting for the pass.

"Back further," whispered Drakely, the half back at his right. "They're breaking through!"

And with the warning all the old hesitancy came back. Nervous, fearful of his punt, of the gigantic Belmont tackles who would burst down upon him, Walton's hands were shaking as he signaled for the ball. Back it came, hard and to the mark. A quick step forward, an up-flung foot and thudding off his toe the ball went spinning through the air. Then a brawny man seemed to leap up out of the ground before him and, springing savagely, crashed upon Walton, hurling him from his feet back many yards on the hard ground. When he regained his breath, there was a sharp pain shooting through his head. The feeling of something damp on his cheek made him put up his hand. When he took it down he saw red. The Belmont tackle's cleats had torn the flesh.

But the punt had gone far down the field and the Allen ends, tackling sharp-

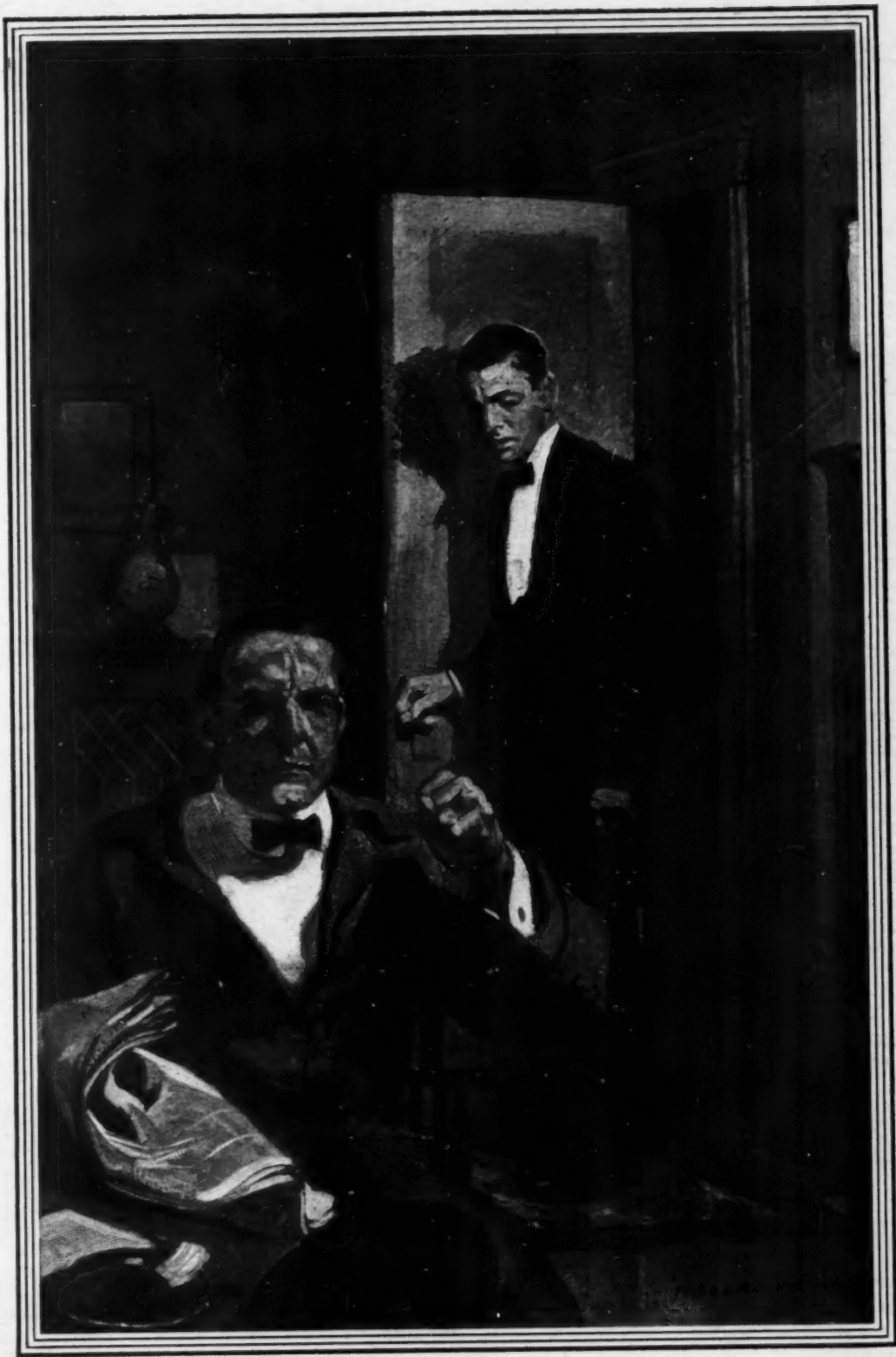
ly, had downed the runner in his tracks. Then Walton heard his name called. Morrison was gesticulating to him. Walton hoped the Captain, seeing his cut cheek, would send him to the sidelines. But Morrison only called cheerfully.

"Good work! That's only a scratch. Watch for trick plays now! Drop back. You're defensive quarterback!"

Whereupon Walton realized with a sinking of the heart that he was the last man between Belmont and the goal posts; that once a runner passed him it meant defeat for the Blue. And now Belmont put the ball in play. Came a sudden shifting of the line, a massing on Allen's left, and with a swift swing of the backfield, the green horde swept 'round the end. Straight toward the sidelines they rushed, an unbroken line of green, guarding one man who held the ball. And Walton recognized that man as Lessor, all Western halfback—a two-hundred-pounder, who, with a sprinter's speed, had plowed through so many teams that they called him the "Tornado."

But Allen was fighting hard. One after another the men in blue flung themselves at the moving green line and, splitting it into sprawling segments, forced Lessor to leave his interference and come galloping down the field. For the moment Walton felt no alarm. The Allen full back, a deadly tackler, half crouched, bending forward on his toes, was waiting to hurl himself in the "Tornado's" path. Walton watched fascinated. Were the fullback to fail, then he—

His cheeks blanched. He turned away. Now a cry bursting from the Allen stands swept over the field to him. An awful cry it was, shrill and short, the sound of many voices in alarm. And Walton knew that the fullback had failed, that Lessor was plunging down on him—the "Tornado" tearing toward the goal posts. Straight down the sidelines the man was pounding—straight past the substitutes' bench, past the Coach—past Walton's father—an awful figure, the head capped blackly, like a shell, the thick legs jerking up and down like the shafts of an engine. Nearer and nearer. Now the ground was



"Jim," said the father gruffly, "Jim, you're a dirty quitter."

drumming with the sound of his feet; now Walton heard the strained breathing, saw the face, dirty and bruised, set in an ugly scowl, saw the tearing, jerking knees, capped with leather, rounded like steel piston-ends. On he came—half man, half machine, the "Tornado," broken loose, wildly storming.

Feeling very stiff and weak Walton moved to meet him. Once he glanced quickly toward the side-lines and saw the Coach, a motionless figure, silent and expressionless. Then, as Lessor was almost upon him, and the crowd loomed behind him, he heard his father's voice:

"Get him, Jim!" the old man was crying shrilly. "Fight him!"

And now Lessor, two yards away, seemed to jerk his knees higher. Holding his neck rigid he plunged straight ahead, never dodging, never swerving—confident, it seemed, that he would sweep this last barrier from his path as he had swept all the others—beaten them down like things of straw.

Desperately Walton's muscles gathered for the spring, but finding the mind would not urge them, collapsed flaccidly. He felt faint, weak, afraid. Fear had stricken him to the very depths of his soul. Weakly he reached out with one hand as Lessor went thundering by—just a pitiful groping, the sign by which football knows the quitter. But the hand struck something. It struck something resilient, and knocking the ball from Lessor's arms, sent it bounding high from the hard ground. Instinctively Walton snatched it, and hugging it to his chest he was off—ten, twenty, forty yards, straight down the side-lines, with the blue jerseys tumbling into the green, clearing the way for him—sixty, seventy yards, on, on until, the last white line sweeping under his feet, he fell in a heap behind the goal posts. Belmont was beaten—beaten by a "quitter."

His story finished, Gray asked for a match to light the cigarette which had gone out.

"But did the crowd, the team know he quit?" asked the Boss.

"Certainly not," smiled Gray. "They called him a hero—said he was a brainy,

daring player. Said that he purposely knocked the ball from Lessor's hands and by taking the chance instead of making the tackle, won the game."

"And Walton?" asked Metcalf in disgust.

"Walton," mused Gray, "let them make all kinds of fuss over him. They pulled him through town in a wagon, banqueted him and all that sort of thing. He was surprised, troubled, though, because his father hadn't said a word to him.

"As soon as he could, Walton hurried home from the celebration. Coming toward the house he saw a light in his father's room. Walton wondered at it. Never before had there been a light in that part of the house after eleven o'clock. He bounded up the stairs and, stopping before the door of his father's room, like a child abashed, he knocked once and hearing no reply, entered.

"Facing the window, gazing toward the campus, the old man sat, his head bent slightly forward—square-backed, straight-stomached, a fine athlete at fifty.

As his son entered he turned on him.

"Jim," said the father gruffly, "Jim, you're a dirty quitter!"

That broke the boy all up. He began to despise himself. A hero to the town and college, to himself he was just an impostor—a week, pitiful impostor who, because of the good blood that was in him, could not brazen it out. He did not sleep that night. By morning he had made up his mind. He would clear out—and begin over, so that some day he might return to Allen with his shoulders square. At the end of a note to his father he wrote:

"I'll be back, Dad, when the yellow's all washed out."

As Gray evidently had finished, Blake rose as if to return to the hand car.

"And will he ever go back?" it occurred to him to ask.

Gray was a long time replying.

"Will he?" demanded Metcalf.

Gray looked him in the eye, his shoulders back, his chest heaving. "Yes," he said finally; "yes, and it won't be long now."



CALLING IN THE DOCTOR

by

O W E N
O L I V E R

DR. PATTERSON scarcely seemed to glance at Miss Layton, heiress of the millionaire, when she entered his consulting room; but his quick mind took an instantaneous photograph and labeled it "hysteria."

"Well?" he asked in his reassuring way. "What is the matter?"

Miss Layton ignored the proffered chair, and stood clenching her hands; a little dark fury, who just missed being pretty to most people's eyes. The doctor's judgment was more flattering. He had a distinct liking for this excitable, turbulent little patient.

"I haven't come to you for medicine," she stated, watching him.

ILLUSTRATED
BY
DAN
SAYRE
GROESBECK

"People who come to me run the risk of having medicine against their will," he told her. He took her wrist and felt her pulse—rather to give her time to cool down than from professional necessity. Then he raised her chin with his hand, and looked into her eyes. "Put out your tongue," he commanded.... "Well, if you wont, you wont.... It appears to me that there's nothing the matter with you but temper!"

"A temper that will have consequences," she assured him. Her bosom heaved.

"And what is it all about?" he inquired soothingly. The answer seemed to burst from her.

"Mr. Royce is going to jilt me—a



"Certainly I like you," said the doctor. "I like you rather considerably, in fact. But I'm afraid you wouldn't let me like you as a wife."

"There are plenty of men who will take me for my money," she continued, with a bitterness that disdained concealment. "It seems for nothing else! Do you know, I didn't really care for him. I just thought he was the only man who wanted me for myself, and so—" She seemed to choke something down.

"Poor girl!" the doctor said. "Poor little girl! How do you think I can help you?"

Miss Layton glanced at him. He opened his eyes wide, half closed them,

week before the wedding. I want to jilt him first."

"And—you—want—to jilt—him—first," the doctor repeated with deliberate slowness. He was trying to solve a puzzle. Why did she come to *him*?

pursed his lips with surprised comprehension.

"I mean to get somebody to marry me to-morrow," she said sullenly. "I don't care much who it is. There are some who will take a hint very readily, you know."

"No doubt. May I ask why you come to me first?"

She nodded.

"I suppose you are entitled to know how I feel about it," she said. "There were several reasons. You are the only man I trust. You have had the decency not to pretend to make love to me for my money. I thought you'd probably like to have it all the same, if you could get it honorably and without pretence. Besides, most of them don't care a scrap about me, and you rather like me, in a friendly way, I think."

"Quite right," he assented. "Certainly I like you—in that way. I like you rather considerably, in fact. But I'm afraid you wouldn't let me like you as a wife. You are very—" He paused for a word.

"Bad-tempered and suspicious," she supplied. "Yes. That's what you'd get with the money. You don't specially want anyone else, do you?"

"No," he said. "No."

"And you'd behave decently, if I did."

"I'm afraid you wouldn't." He smiled. "Now seriously—you evidently regard me as the nearest approach to a trustworthy friend. Let me be one. Don't think any more of this nonsense. You are a nice girl, soured by being sought for your money. You are quite worth seeking for yourself, if you'll sweeten! Grit your teeth and bear this abominable thing, and some day a real lover will come along. Don't spoil your life to save a slur that will soon pass over. You're young, my dear girl—two and twenty, aren't you?—and I'm quite old—five and thirty. I have learned to

understand what a wise man said about troubles. 'This, too, will pass.' Let me give you a composing draught and—"

"It's no use talking like that," she said. "My mind is made up. When I leave you I shall go to Mrs. Reynolds'—she has an evening at-home—and I shall tell the first man I meet whom I've refused that Royce is going to jilt me, unless I jilt him first. He won't need any more invitation than that. . . . *I shall do it!*"

The doctor toyed with a stethoscope.

"For whom is he going to jilt you?" he asked at length.

"Evelyn Mills."

"Your companion!"

"Yes. She is better looking than I, of course. I know I am quite plain."

"You silly girl!" the doctor cried. "You aren't anything of the sort. Don't be so ridiculous! You are quite a good-looking little person; and quite a nice little person—some excess of temper excepted—if you'll get over your suspicions, and be your natural self. Oh, you needn't suspect me of using flattery as a medicine to your injured vanity. I am honest enough. I mean it."

"Then—" she said; and paused.

"Then be that nice little person," he counseled. "Take the draught; and wake up sensible to-morrow."

"To-morrow," she declared, "I shall be married. I am going to run away to-night—if anyone will run away with me. Since you, who like me a little—and nobody else does—can't put up with me, even for all my money, perhaps no one will! Good-night."

The doctor detained her.

"I entreat you!" he begged. "Don't go and tie yourself up to some money-grubbing rascal and ruin your young life. Don't, little girl."



Old Layton was a very different character from his daughter.

"I will!" she said through close lips. "I will!"

"Take a night's sleep and think over it."

"I wont." She looked him steadily in the eyes. "I wont," she repeated steadily. The doctor drew a deep breath.

"When is Royce going to do it?" he asked.

"The day after to-morrow. I heard them arrange it on the balcony."

"Then you can afford to wait till to-morrow. I will make you an offer. Take my draught and do nothing to-night. To-morrow, if you hold to your resolution, and feel that you are safer in my hands than in anyone's else I will marry you."

"You mean it? On your word of honor?"

"On my word of honor," he said gravely, "if you wish it, I will marry you to-morrow."

"Then I will wait," she promised slowly. "I will try to be—not so bad that the money wont make up for me. Or we'll share the money and separate, if you like. You wont let people know that you did it for the money, will you?"

"No," he said, "if we do it. I hope for more wisdom to-morrow. Now I will mix up the draught. You are to go straight to your room and take it and lie down. If you aren't asleep in half an hour, you are to take another dose. In any case you are not to come out of your room again, to-night. Promise!"

"Very well," she agreed. "We keep our promises, you and I, don't we?"

"Yes," he said. "We keep our promises. If you get over this foolishness we're going to be friends, you and I. There! That's the draught; the two of them. Now go and rest. Poor little perturbed spirit!"

He patted her shoulder and escorted her to her carriage. When it had gone he put on his hat, and went to see her father.

Old Layton was a very different character from his daughter—a full-blown, heavy-jawed man, who spoke as slowly as he thought quickly.

"Well, doctor?" he inquired.

"Your daughter has been to see me," the doctor said. "She is hysterical; in

the popular sense, not the medical. I have told her to come home and go to bed. I have given her a strong draught."

The millionaire glanced at him for a moment; saw that more was to come; nodded.

"I dislike betraying a patient's confidence, even to her parents; but in this case I must. She has overheard a conversation between her *fiancé* and Miss Mills. They are going to run off together, the day after to-morrow."

The millionaire stretched himself.

"Between ourselves," he said, "it's the best thing that could happen for Marian. She gets rid of two wasters at once."

"Does she care much for him?"

"No."

"Are you sure?"

Mr. Layton nodded.

"When a man has nobody in the world but one girl," he said, "he watches her. That's all you *can* do with Marian. She's out of hand, and no one can manage her."

"Yes. She is very sensitive about being courted for her money. Rather than be jilted, she proposes to jilt him; to run off with somebody else first, in fact."

"Whom?" the millionaire asked briefly.

"She doesn't much care, she says. She gave me the first chance."

Mr. Layton surveyed him keenly.

"Well?" he demanded.

"If I did not take it, she proposed to give the opportunity to the first suitor she met. I judged that she meant it."

"I expect so. Well?"

"The only way I could see to stop it was to persuade her to sleep over it. She absolutely refused at first; but in the end I persuaded her—on condition that, if she was in the same mind to-morrow, I'd marry her!"

The millionaire toyed with a pen.

"Do you like my girl?" he inquired.

"In a friendly way."

"Only?"

"Only," the doctor agreed.

"And her money is sufficient make-weight?"

"It isn't exactly that. I wouldn't make her as unhappy as some people would. Poor little girl!"



"Poor little girl," the millionaire repeated; "Marian's a deal nicer than people know. Do you know, she has about two proposals a month."

Her father sighed.

"Poor little girl!" he repeated. "Marian's a deal nicer than people know. It's just—a kink. She wants to be liked for herself, and these infernal money-hunters— Do you know, she has about two proposals a month. Well, it seems you like her a bit; and apparently she likes you better than most of them. I think she means it—about marrying, I suppose you do?"

The doctor pulled his moustache thoughtfully.

"If she holds to her intention," he said, "I can't do anything else. I promised on honor; but I don't care about marrying on such conditions. I looked upon it as a risk rather than an intention. I thought she'd possibly change her mind." The millionaire shook his head. "Well, you know her best. . . . Another alternative occurred to me. You are a powerful man to make an enemy of. I dare say Royce would come to terms. Can't you make it a condition

that he runs off with this precious Miss Mills to-night? In that case your daughter's motive for marriage would disappear. She can't jilt him after the event. There is really no reason why some one shouldn't marry her for herself, if she waits."

The millionaire nodded.

"You give up the money lightly," he said, regretfully, it seemed. "I almost wish—I think I can influence Miss Mills more easily than Royce. He's a scoundrel; but he's a courageous scoundrel. . . I'll see if I can bribe the hussy! Yes. I think they'll go to-night."

Dr. Patterson heard of their going on his morning round. Mrs. Pedley told him first. She had evidently just started out telling people!

"They were seen at the junction going off together," she said breathlessly; "and his mother had a letter from him this morning. He is going to marry her at Newtown this forenoon. I suppose he's done it now!"

"Oh!" said the doctor calmly. "So *that's* how he saves his face!"

"What!" she cried. "You *don't* mean she turned him off! A week before the wedding! That *is* news!"

"It soon will be!" the doctor thought, as Mrs. Pedley hurried off. "I'm afraid it wasn't quite straight; but it will comfort that poor little person. The pity of it is that she would be such a nice girl, if some one could straighten out the 'kink,' as her father called it. I suppose I'd better go and see her."

Half a dozen people told him of the elopement on the way. He gave them all to understand that Royce was saving his face after being dismissed by Miss Layton.

"I suppose she found out that he was after her money," they usually suggested. Kind old Mrs. Meredith added that it was a blessing in disguise. "Marian Layton's temper has been ruined by fortune-hunters," she pronounced. "Three-quarters of her faults would disappear, if she found a real lover. The other quarter is only temper; and that's spice to the cake, if a man liked her."

"I don't know but what you're right,"

the doctor agreed. "She is an interesting girl, certainly."

"And the spice will keep her interesting," wise old Mrs. Meredith predicted. "A good fellow would manage her all right, if she cared for him. She is a girl with a great power of loving; good stuff running to seed."

The doctor nodded slowly. He felt a great compassion for Marian. He would try brotherly kindness and reason, he decided; offer himself as a very sincere friend. He even thought out a little speech. It froze on his tongue when he was shown into the library. She was sitting in a big arm chair, holding the arms tightly. Her mouth was set, and her eyes were dark. She looked a picture of cold, suppressed anger.

"You spoke to my father," she charged him, "and he arranged this. I have to thank you for my public jilting. If I were a man—" She clenched her hands. "Perhaps I can punish you more! You gave me your word of honor to marry me to-day, if I wished it."

The doctor frowned slightly.

"The necessity—from your point of view—has disappeared," he told her. "As to the jilting, I have given people to understand that Royce has gone off with Miss Mills to save his face, because you have jilted him. You are spared any humiliation, I think."

She laughed a faint, savage laugh.

"Humiliation!" she cried. "You have shown me that I am so—so worthless and unattractive—so *repulsive*—that you, who realize some few small points of likableness in me, which nobody else does!—you who are poor, and who do not want to marry anyone else—dislike me more than you like all my money. Such a huge lot of money. . . . Such a *horrible* girl."

"There *is* a horrible point about you," the doctor said gravely, "—that you would have married a man you do not love, just out of revenge. I have saved you from that, Marian."

"Not unless you break your word of honor," the girl said steadily. "The object of the revenge has changed, that is all. It is you, instead of Royce. I hold you to your promise."



"You think I am very wrong-headed and troublesome, don't you? I hope that isn't what you like in me; because I sha'n't be any trouble at all to you."

The doctor sat down, and looked at her in silence for a long while.

"It seems that you can't escape your passion," he said. "But you can't escape your reason either. Be an honest girl to yourself, if you won't confess it to me. You know very well that I have not weighed you against your money in the way that you suggest. You know very well that I wouldn't tell you that I saw attractions in you, if I didn't. You know just as well that I have acted as I have done because I wish your happiness. You are a wrong-headed girl; but you are an honest one. Be honest to a man who is honest to you. I am in your hands, Marian. I don't break my word of honor. I am not pleading for myself. I shouldn't find marrying you a terribly distressing thing, if you'd behave yourself. I am pleading for you. *You* would find it very hard to be married to a man you don't love. Now, little girl."

Marian Layton seemed to droop in the chair. Her hands relaxed their fierce hold, and her mouth softened.

"You don't break your word of honor," she said. "Tell me on your honor, do you really think that I am—not altogether horrible? You won't have to marry me. So you needn't mind what you say."

"There's a good girl!" He patted her arm. "I think some very nice things

about you; on my honor, I consider you pretty—"

"Oh, no!"

"Well, I do. And very interesting. And very capable of being loved for yourself, your real self."

She gave a sharp cry.

"Nobody does," she cried. "Nobody has ever!"

"Well," he said, "have *you* ever? Even Royce?"

"No," she admitted.

"I just thought—he seemed to want me for myself, and so... I'm not easy to like, I know."

"You easily could be," the doctor said. "Oh! Very easily!" He took her hand, and she gave a little gasp, and looked at him. The look seemed to set him afire. He put his arm round her suddenly. "You're *very* easy to love," he said; "and I'm going to make you love me!" And then he kissed her.

She nestled closely to him with a soft cry.

"Yes," she agreed.

"Yes. I didn't yesterday, you know. Now I do—now I do! You think I am very wrong-headed

and troublesome, don't you? I hope that isn't what you like in me; because I sha'n't be any trouble at all to you! I suppose you don't believe me?"

The doctor laughed slowly.

"Strange to say," he told her, "I do! You see, you couldn't be a trouble to me. You're such—such a *joy*, sweetheart!"



"I think some very nice things about you."

ANOTHER KIND OF LOVE STORY

JAMES FRANCIS DWYER, author of "The White Waterfall," "Blind Dog of El Corib" and "Black Horseman of Mir Jehal"—has written for the next issue of the **RED BOOK MAGAZINE** one of the greatest love stories ever published. "**THE WHITE CAMEL OF DRAS**," he calls it. Speedy action, vivid color, wonderfully romantic mystery, and a great love are combined in the tale. It's the best thing Mr. Dwyer has done.

In the January **RED BOOK MAGAZINE**, out December 23rd.

The Keelhauling of Fat Dan

by FREDERICK
R. BECHDOLT

Author of "Lighthouse Tom," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY W. H. D. KOERNER

KEELHAULING," said Duffy. The rest of us focused our eyes on him. No one had spoken for some time. His quaint old nautical expression had come apropos of nothing, had landed in the middle of our circle around Mother Monohan's stove like a stone in a calm pool of water. The resultant ripple of curiosity seemed to satisfy Duffy; he put his pipe back between his teeth and puffed on again in silence.

"Well," said old Rose finally; "and wot of it?"

"'Twas that yarn of yours of clubhauling made me think of it," said Duffy, "and of Fat Dan. 'Twas years ago, it was. I did not think I was so old."

"What is keelhauling?" I asked. "And what was years ago?"

Duffy smoked on, his eyes fixed somewhere in the wreaths which floated above his head, and at length he said, "Shall I spin?"

The members of the circle said with one accord, "Aye, spin."

"Well then, it was this way," said

Duffy: "In Montevideo, Greek Louis had his deep-sea boardin' house. This here Fat Dan was a runner for the place when first I run afoul of him. That was—let me see—that was '79. Fat Dan was not wot ye would call a terrible fat man from the build of him, so much as his face. He always looked slick as a seal, as if he had just stowed away a full meal. Smooth cheeks and little eyes as hard as marbles; that was him.

I seen the
door swing open
—very slow, and
just a crack. And
in the crack was
Fat Dan's face.

W.H.D.K.

"There was twelve of us in Greek Louis' boardin' house, and eleven was puttin' in all their spare time figurin' whether it was wort' while to murder Fat Dan. I stood by and let them others hatch up wot trouble they pleased. 'Twas not my funeral. I was on the beach t'rough my own doin's, and no fault of any crimp's.

"Ye see, lad, Greek Louis had his own way in Montevideo in them days, and when ye come to his boardin' house, he owned ye, in a manner of speakin'. He had the consuls and the police; he shipped ye when and where he pleased. No good seaman wants to stop in sech a place. Consequence is, the boardin' master has to catch them as best he can. Greek Louis had these here eleven men. Fat Dan had done the catchin' for him.

"How? Why, in this here case it was two or three bottles of whiskey and a game of talk. Fat Dan was long on talk. It dripped from him as smooth as ile. Them eleven had come to port in a good ship, wit' a lot of wages owin' to them. But arter Fat Dan had got done wit' them, they had deserted. He had stowed them away wit' Greek Louis; and the ship had sailed. So here they was. They'd lost their wages; and if Greek Louis said the word, they'd go to jail for deserters. And if one of them so much as batted an eye, he would say the word, all right. One o' them big-eyed, pale-faced men wit' a little black moustache, that comes from the other end of the Mediterranean, was Greek Louis. Anyone that knows a Levantine will tell ye the breed is double-dealin' and cruel-hearted.

"So here was these eleven sailor men a-settin' on the wooden bench along one side of Greek Louis' barroom by days, wit'out the price of one drink among them all—a-thinkin' of the wages they had lost, and of the wages that Greek Louis was going to steal away from them in advance money when he got ready to ship them again. Them things was wot they had to think about—and how they had their choice, to go to jail if they raised a single kick.

"Settin' there on that wooden bench, they could watch Greek Louis a-smokin' all day long at one o' them Turkish water-pipes in his corner behind the bar;

and showin' all his white teeth when a customer come in; and they could watch Fat Dan a-framin' up new jobs wit' the Greek to get more flies in this here spider's web. Or, like as not, they could take a bit off the rough side o' Fat Dan's tongue when he pleased to hand it to them. He had been smooth enough when he was gettin' them, Fat Dan had; but now he was not takin' the trouble to be smooth any longer.

"Many's the time I seen him send one of them sailors on an errand or put him to swabbin' off the floor wit' a string of language like the mate of a whaler. And then I'd see the ten that was left on the bench a-lookin' at one another out of the sides of their eyes as much as to say, 'Shall we get him down and put the boots to him and take our six mont's for ut?'

"Eleven men from Liverpool, they was, as tough a bunch as ever come from that port, and it has sent some hard ones to sea. They was used to takin' the heavy end of it, and willing to take it, too, for the sake of gettin' in a good lick on their own account.

"We slept upstairs. Men, I tell ye, it was possible to t'row a cat between the cracks in the walls o' that doss house. And there was no night that passed but I could hear three or four of them a-mutterin' over some scheme to get this man that had got them so foul.

"Now, as I was a-sayin', it was none of my funeral. I was here through my own doin's; a bit of fever after a drunk. In them days, I had not stiddied down. So I had meself to curse and not Fat Dan. But wit' these eleven it was different. Greek Louis owned them; and all through the lyin' tongue of that smooth-cheeked, pig-eyed runner. And all they could do about it was to sit down and take it and say, 'Thank ye kindly.' 'Twas natural, them bein' tough, for them to want to come pretty clost to murder.

"That was the lay o' things when this here yarn starts; a crew of Liverpool bullies wit' their fingers itchin' for the fat gullet of that boardin' house runner. And Greek Louis settin' behind his bar smokin' of his Turkish water-pipe, knowin' it all as well as if they had told him."

Duffy paused and knocked the ashes from his pipe. The other old seafaring

men smoked on in silence—grey-haired men, belonging to a past era, the age of sailing ships. Wild action was to them day labor; adventure but incident.

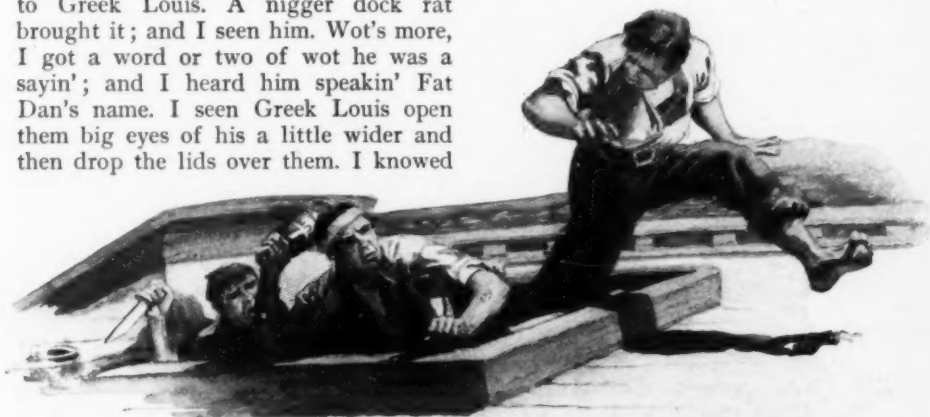
"That was the lay of things," Duffy repeated, "and I'm a-headin' torards this here keelhauling. It come about this way:

"Come a schooner into the port of Montevideo and she loaded wit' a cargo of hides for New York. As soon as she had got her cargo, the crew deserted. Fat Dan was not about when the news come to Greek Louis. A nigger dock rat brought it; and I seen him. Wot's more, I got a word or two of wot he was a sayin'; and I heard him speakin' Fat Dan's name. I seen Greek Louis open them big eyes of his a little wider and then drop the lids over them. I knowed

derin' if the Greek had found him out.

"Greek Louis took the stem of that water-pipe away from his mouth, so that he could show all them white teeth of his. When Greek Louis smiled, it put ye in mind of a shark when he turns on his back and opens up for business. I could see how them eyes of his went half shut; and his voice was smooth like Chiny silk. And, ye can lay to that, he seen that Fat Dan was worried.

"'Well,' says he, 'Dan, my friend, wot news?'



Fat Dan shot up on deck. Behind him came a half a dozen of that crew of ours, the worst in the bunch.

that them deserters had not come to this place.

"I says nothin' to no man, but I done some figurin'. 'Twas plain that Fat Dan had helped that crew overside. Greek Louis had not got them. Some other crimp was richer by twelve able-bodied seamen.

"'Well,' thinks I, 'Fat Dan has tried the double-cross on the Greek; and now things will begin to start goin', or I miss my reckonin'.

"Which they did. I sat there on the wooden bench and watched them. First thing, in comes Fat Dan. And the minute I clapped my eyes on him, I knew that he had begun wishin' already that he had not been so brave. Ye see, it took a big man to best Greek Louis in Montevideo then. And Fat Dan's face was a little flabby-like; as if he had been won-

"'News enough,' says Dan like he was mad. 'Schooner *Hesperides* is ready to sail and her crew went overside last night. I think,' says he, 'Jake Hansen got them.'

"Well, mates, Greek Louis he swore and he pulled out some of his hair and he stomped the floor until, if I had not heard wot I had heard, I would of been sure he was wild. And when he had done cursing Jake Hansen and yellin' about his own hard luck, he stopped all of a sudden, and 'Dan,' says he, 'we must steal them deserters from the Swede. And now,' he says, 'I depend on you, Dan, my friend. Go quick and fetch the "Little Officer wit' One Eye." Send him to me, and do not come back, but find out for sure where them men are. I count on you.'

"Well, Fat Dan was fooled all right.

His cheeks was smooth again. He give one of them ily grins of his and, 'Aye,' says he, 'count on me.' And he put out wit'out more words like a man who is tickled to see things a-comin' his way. And no sooner had he gone than Greek Louis put that madness away from him and let his eyelids drop down like curtains, as he set there a-makin' bubblin' noises wit' that water-pipe. After he had smoked a minute or two he sung out for me, and when I come over to him, he sent me out to fetch the skipper of the *Hesperides*.

"'And,' says he, 'keep yer eyes open that ye don't run afoul of anyone from this here place.'

"Ye see, I was the only seaman about the place that he could trust, me bein' there of my own will. I had the luck to find the skipper clost by. A little man, that skipper of the *Hesperides*, not much to look at. He had a slow way of talkin', too. But let me tell ye when he give an order in his quiet way a man would jump at his first word.

"Now, when the skipper got into Greek Louis' place, it did not take them two long to do business. And I set there on the wooden bench where I could watch and hear. And I says to one of the sailormen from Liverpool, says I, 'Mate, we're goin' to get a ship now.' For Greek Louis was makin' the bargain for sailors cheap this time.

"The skipper, he went out; and in a minute or two along come 'The Little Officer wit' One Eye.' That was wot they called him in Montevideo. He was a bad one, he was; and Greek Louis owned him. He went behind the bar, and I seen him and the Greek put their two heads together. Now my ears is good and in them days they was better than now. I heard them speak Fat Dan's name. 'Oho,' says I to meself; and I made an excuse of goin' over to get some matches off of the bar. I dropped two or three and made a bungle of pickin' them up. I heard enough.

"'Get him when he comes back,' Louis was sayin'. 'Ye mind that Dutchman wit' his t'roat cut? I can furnish men to swear.' He looked up at me and I knew it was time to go back to my bench.

"Well, I seen them two grinnin' to-

gether; and then, out of the tail of my eye, I seen the door swing open—very slow and just a crack. And in the crack was Fat Dan's face. Ye see how it is: when men is handin' each other the double-cross, they get suspicious; and that was wot was eatin' Fat Dan. He was a lookin' ahead of him to see who was in the place and wot was goin' on.

"And there was Greek Louis and 'The Little Officer wit' One Eye.' And their heads was clost together as they hatched their plot. Now wot Fat Dan heard I do not know; or whether he heard one word; but wot he seen would of been enough for me if I was in his shoes, and I had tried to hand Greek Louis wot he had tried.

"Fat Dan's face stayed there in that doorway long enough for a man to count five. In that time it turned the color of a fish's belly, and then the door went shut very quiet. Greek Louis heard the sound and he looked up. 'Who was that?' says he to me. 'Couldn't say, sir,' says I, for this here was not my funeral. A minute or two after that, them two got done talkin' behind the bar and 'The Little Officer wit' One Eye' went away.

"Well, men, Fat Dan did not show up that night. And Greek Louis did not say a word about it to any of us either. But he was busy the next mornin', and the next arternoon. And before evenin' it was known that the police was a-lookin' for that runner—him bein' wanted for knifing a Dutchman.

"We heard the talk of the hunt, of course; and we heard that Fat Dan had stowed himself away somers or other so snug that they could not find him. And the next day after that Greek Louis took us and signed us for the *Hesperides*—the eleven men from Liverpool and me. We got a bottle of whiskey apiece and we went out to the ship.

"'Well,' says I to meself when the schooner was under way, 'I'd like to know how Fat Dan comes out wit' the Greek and 'The Little Officer wit' One Eye.' Never try to double-cross a Levantine!"

Duffy paused again and looked around our circle. "I thought," said old Rose, "this here was a yarn concernin' keel-haulin'."

Duffy waved his pipe in a wide gesture. "Give me time," said he; "I'm gettin' to that. I wanted to show ye how things stood wit' all of us. Now we had no more than got under way before them eleven men from Liverpool begun drinkin' up their whiskey as fast as they could suck it from the bottles. I don't know why it was—for in them days I was good friends wit' liquor—but I only took one man-sized drink from mine.

"Before the anchor was up them bullies was roarin'. And when we had things squared away and was headed out to sea, the mate called me aft and give me the wheel. I stood there a-holdin' her to her course, and a-listenin' to the yells that come up from the fo'c'stle. Then all of a sudden, here comes the cook a-draggin' a man along wit' him.

"It was Fat Dan. My eyes hung out when I seen him.

"The cook come aft and Fat come wit' him; and when he got the skipper up, 'Stowaway, sir,' says he.

"Well, the skipper looked Fat Dan over from heels to head, and you can bet he knew who it was, all right. But here we was a-headin' out to sea and it costs money to put a man ashore; and anyhow, here was a good fo'c'stle hand for his keep.

"Fat Dan did not look so slick as I had seen him last. He had fallen off a bit, and he was shakin' all over wit' the fear of Montevideo and Greek Louis. And when the skipper asked him if he was a seaman, he said he had his A. B. So that settled it. 'Go forard,' says the skipper. 'Ye'll work your passage to New York.'

"Wit' that, Fat Dan he went torards the fo'c'stle, and I kept one eye on the companionway the minute he went below, ye can lay to that. In two seconds there come a yell like one of them liner's sirens. Fat Dan shot up on deck. Behind him come a half a dozen of that crew of ours; the worst of the bunch. One was wavin' an empty whiskey bottle; the other had his sheath knife in his hand.

"'Now,' thinks I, 'comes Fat Dan's troubles.'

"He run straight aft and every jump he made, he let a yell out of him. His face was the color of an ash-pile and

them little eyes of his was big now wit' the fear that was in the heart of him. Behind him them six was howling like wolves.

"When he got amidships, Fat Dan ducked and the man wit' the bottle let fly. It missed Dan's head by a matter of an inch and fetched up ag'in' the mainmast, and the bits flew all over the deck.

"It was the first mate's watch and he come a-runnin' forard. Fat went straight for him a-yellin', 'Help, help,' like a drownin' man.

"The man that had throwed the bottle was a-laughin' and it sounded about as pleasant as a hyena; he had lost two or three of his teeth some time or other, and that made his mouth look like the mouth of a dog. The one wit' the sheath knife—he was a little bent-over man wit' long arms—was a-comin' on in big leaps—the way a monkey runs. I seen one of his arms go back over his shoulder and then the knife come streakin' over Fat Dan's shoulder, and went whizzing on overside.

"Then Fat Dan and the mate come together head on. The mate grabbed him by the shirt and flung him aft like he was a sack of meal, and kept on his own course. And now I heard the skipper and the second mate comin' up on deck. Fat Dan, he picked himself up and scrambled up to the quarter deck and he throwed himself down there a-whimpering.

"Well, the skipper and the two mates lined up in front of that Liverpool gang. And them sailors stopped. It takes more than rotten whiskey to make a seaman lay hands on an officer. They stopped there and they stood clost together. And that was all there was to that ruction.

"In five minutes the skipper had the whole crew on deck and lined out in front of him. He talked in that chilly way he had, slow as ye please and like icicles the words come. All he did was to promise to put the first man that lifted a hand against Fat Dan in irons for the balance of the voyage. But the manner of his saying it done the business. The eleven was half sober by the time he had done talkin', and when he ordered them forard they went like so many dogs that has been well bootied.

"Fat Dan, he went along wit' them and no man looked at him. That night at



There was the skipper and the two mates, and Fat Dan between them. The skipper held the jug, and says he: "This stowaway has been stealin' water from the ship's cask."

the change of watch there was a fo'c'stle council—eleven in it, and Fat Dan a-layin' in his bunk and listenin'. They done some ugly talkin'.

"The upshot of it was that they had their own skins to look out for, and they would let him alone until they was ashore in New York. Then they would lay hold of him and beat the life out of him. They talked that over enthusiastic. The manner of the promises they made to each other would make your hair stand on end. And Fat Dan he had to lay there and listen.

"So after that hour none of them eleven said a word to Fat Dan. When he was by they would act as if there was no such a man a-living. But many a time two or three of them would get inside of his hearing and they would talk it over—little things they had in mind to do to him, such as gougin' out an eye or the like. And he would always listen, too.

"That was the way things went at the beginnin' of the voyage. If Fat Dan had been a different breed, it would not have been so bad; but he was one of them that crawls on his belly when he is the under dog. First thing he done was to come up to me one fine afternoon as I was settin' on deck a-mendin' my shirt. 'Mate,' says he, in that ily way he had, 'I take it thankful ye don't bear no hard feelins' over Greek Louis' place.'

"I cut him short. Says I, 'Ye heard wot the skipper said,' I says; 'now I aint got nothin' to do wit' that Liverpool bunch, but if ye try to have any talk wit' me, I'll bust yer jaw and take the balance of the voyage in irons for it. That's where me and ye stands,' says I.

"'No offense,' he says. 'No,' says I. 'And look out now, for I'll clout ye if there is any.'

"Wit that he went about his business and he let me alone. I didn't want to listen to his troubles, ye can lay to that.

"That was the way things was goin' when one day we run into a big blow. We seen it comin' in time to get ready for it, and we had things pretty snug when it struck us. Bein' an old tub and ready to open up like a basket if there was any big strain, the *Hesperides* had to run before it. For five days and nights we raced, wit' the big seas a-chasing us,

and the wind a-trying to take the bare sticks out of her. At the end of that storm we was a-keepin' the pumps a-going every watch. Water in the hold and more a-comin' every minute.

"Well, when the blow was done wit', here we was, away off of our course. We headed her back and we done the best we could for many days. We made out to stop the worst of the leaks, and we was beginnin' to get a little rest from the pumps. Then we crossed the line, and one fine day the breeze left us. We was becalmed, and away out of the regular path of vessels.

"Men, it was more than two weeks; sails as limp as dish-rags, and the sea like it had been spread wit' ile. There was days at a time when there did not seem to be so much as a swell. And the sun was so hot that we could smell the pitch a-biling between the planks.

"Nothin' to do but wait for a wind. And a wind was the only thing we could think of. That sort of thing is hell. Then the provisions run low. We was down to a little very bum ship's biscuit and the fag end o' the salt horse. Potatoes was gone long ago, and no sign of anything fresh. Wot wit' all this and the rotten feedin' in Greek Louis' boardin' house, the crew begun to get scurvy.

"It makes ye feel like your arms and legs was made of lead and all ye want to do is to lay around on deck and let things slide. We done just that; and there was no sign of a breeze, although we watched the sky from mornin' until night. Over us the sun was a-shinin', and under us the sea was a-shinin' back at it. And ye can lay to it, these here eleven men from Liverpool, a-layin' on the deck, kept watchin' Fat Dan and lickin' their chops again' the day they got him in port; for they laid it all to him."

Duffy paused again to relight his pipe. Old Rose and one or two of the seafaring men nodded as those who knew. As for me, I found myself trying to see that picture just as Duffy had drawn it. Duffy puffed hard.

"And then," said he, "the water run low. The first mate found it out. We had a spare cask under the main hatch; and when he went below to see about pumpin' from it into the cask we had on deck, he

found that it had been broached in some way durin' the storm. It was as dry as a gourd.

"That day the skipper put all hands on allowance—the whole ship's company, no man better than the others now. A half a pint apiece every mornin' after breakfast, and lucky if it held out then until we sighted some vessel.

"Well, we'd line up every mornin' for our allowance; each man would take his. Some had old whiskey flasks, and some had tin cans, and some used their pannikins. Some would walk away wit' theirs, not touchin' it then; and some would take a sup or two, then go and stow the balance in their bunks; and none of us but was chewin' our tongues before evenin' come, to keep them wet.

"The days managed to get along wit' a man at mast-head durin' every watch to look out for a sail, and the distress signals out. And every day the water gettin' that much lower in the cask. The scurvy was raisin' hell wit' them men from Liverpool; their teeth was wobblin' in their mouths and their faces was turnin' blue, and their eyes was big and bright like men that has a fever. And they did not talk about wot they would do to Fat Dan now, for talkin' makes a man more thirsty. They just sat around on deck and waited.

"Then I begun to notice a funny thing about this here Fat Dan. When we would get our water allowance in the mornin', as I was sayin', some would do one thing and some another. At first Fat Dan had started trying to save his; but all of a sudden he changed his course. He would take his pannikin and he would suck it down in two or three big gulps.

"Now that was Fat Dan's own business and none of mine. But wot got me was that he did not show any signs of bein' the worse off for it. He made fuss enough and he growled always, but the fever was not in his eyes and his words did not come husky like the others. He looked pretty nigh as slick and cool as ever.

"Thinks I, 'Mebbe this guy has the best scheme—to drink it all at onct.' I tried it next mornin'. By night I was nigh crazy, and my tongue was stickin' to the top of my mouth so that I had to

claw it away wit' my fingers. So I knowed it was not that was savin' Fat Dan.

"The next day after I had tried this swallerin' my water allowance all at once, the skipper cut us down still more. Then we began to taste wot hell is like. And still there was no sign of any air, and the sun was workin' overtime above. And the man at the masthead would see things that was not really a-goin' on at all, and holler 'Sail ho!' And then find that he'd been wrong.

"And still Fat Dan looked none the worse. He kept a-whinin' louder; but I knew it was guff. I wondered why them eleven men from Liverpool had not suspicioned him. But they was too busy wit' their own troubles, bein' most of them pretty sick wit' scurvy and thirst. Says I to meself, 'This Fat Dan growls too much; he's makin' a play; he has a store of water of his own.'

"Well, when I'd got that into my head, I made up me mind to keep a watch on him. But the first mate saved me the trouble. All this come on the day that the water run out entirely.

"Us up forard was layin' around tryin' to wet our cracked lips wit' our tongues, which was as dry as pine boards. Fat Dan had gone below. The first mate slipped down after him. And in a minute up they come, the mate holdin' Fat Dan by the collar in one hand and carryin' a two-gallon jug in the other. The curses that the mate was a-growlin' come thick and fast, but I could not make them out, his tongue bein' puffy and his lips as thick as a nigger's. Them two went straight aft.

"The crew seen it, and they understood; and them eleven men from Liverpool, as sick as they was, got up all at once and yelled. But they dropped down again, for yellin' was expensive.

"In a minute we got the call for all hands. There was the skipper and the two mates when we went aft; and Fat Dan between them. I told ye about the skipper—a little man, slow talkin', wit' a voice like ice. He held the jug, and says he:

" 'This stowaway has been stealin' from the ship's cask.' I can see him now as he said it, his eyes all big and bright

and the skin tight on his cheeks wit' blue spots. But for all it had a funny crack in it from the dryness of his pipes, his voice was stiddy yet and cold. The words come slow and careful; and ye can lay to it, he did not use too many of them, for words meant more thirst.

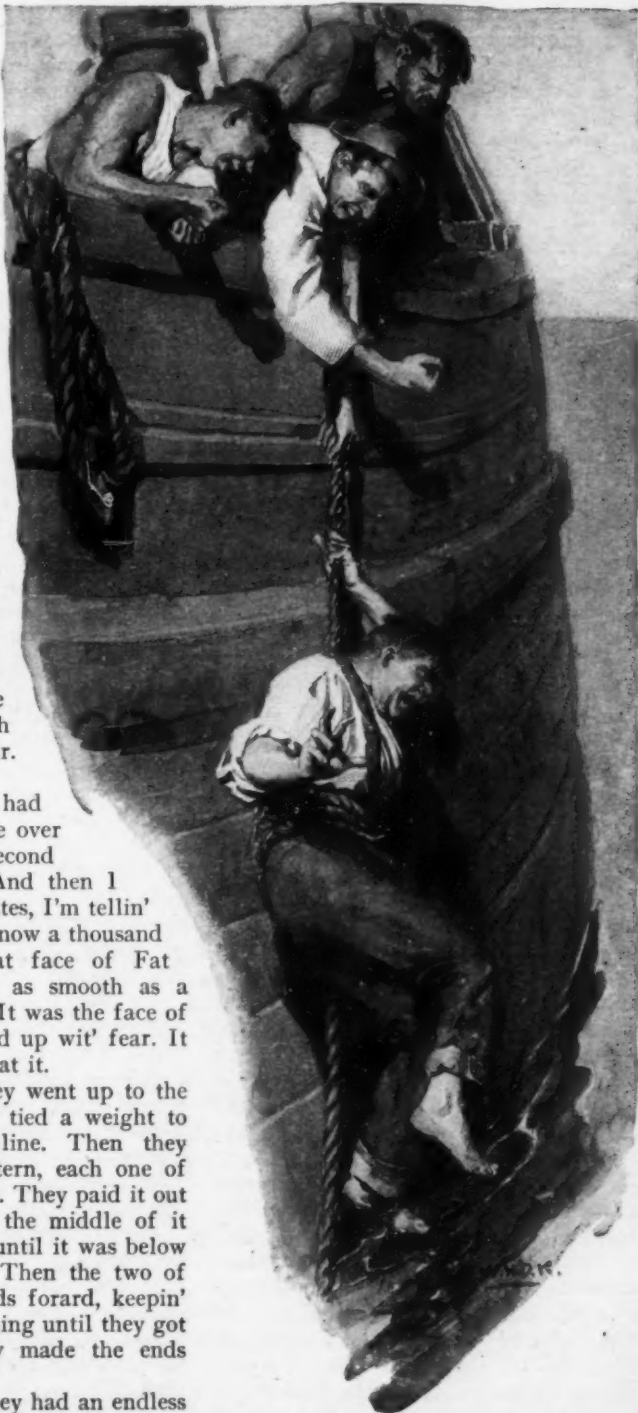
"'Now,' says he, 'he wanted more water, more than his share. He gets it.' He gave us a look. 'Are ye too sick to pull on a rope?'"

"Thinks I, 'He's goin' to hang him and take a chanst on it.' And so did the others think the same, for all of them croaked at the same time like a bunch of frogs, 'Aye, aye, sir. Give us a hold!'"

"The first mate, he had a coil of half-inch line over his arm. He give the second mate one end of it. And then I seen a funny thing. Mates, I'm tellin' ye the truth, there was now a thousand little wrinkles on that face of Fat Dan's, that had been as smooth as a boy's a minute before. It was the face of an old man, all knotted up wit' fear. It made ye crawl to look at it.

"The two mates, they went up to the quarter deck and they tied a weight to the middle of that line. Then they dropped it over the stern, each one of them holdin' to his end. They paid it out and out and they let the middle of it sink lower and lower, until it was below the level of the keel. Then the two of them brought their ends forard, keepin' them outside of everything until they got amidships. There they made the ends fast to each other.

"Ye get me, lad? They had an endless line that run under the keel. The skipper took Fat Dan by the neck and shoved



We carried Fat Dan to the rail and dropped him overside.

him forard; and Fat Dan dropped to the deck and begun to beg. The skipper kicked him as he laid. Fat Dan jumped to his feet and started to make a run for it. I was nighest to him—good luck for him it was me and none of them Liverpool men—I got him by the legs as he come and throwed him. The mates come and took him from me. They dragged him amidships and they had to fight the eleven off from him now. A savage look-in' crew them eleven was, wit' their lips all swelled and their faces all gaunted and their eyes all big and shiny; and them a-cursin' like sick frogs that try to croak and cannot make a good job of it.

"'Easy,' says the skipper, 'I'll put ye all in irons if ye make one more break like that.' So they fell away and stood by for orders.

"The mates, they throwed Fat Dan to the deck and they made him fast to that endless line. The skipper brought the jug wit' him.

"Says he, 'All hands gets a drink; it may be the last for some time, lads.' After they had had it, he says, 'This Fat Dan took more than his share of the ship's water; we'll give him all the water *he* wants.'

"I seen now wot was a-comin'; and, 'Keelhaulin'!' croaks the little man that had tried to toss his knife into Fat Dan's back that first day out.

"'Aye,' says the skipper, 'that's wot they call it.'

"Well, it was the twelve of us that done it; some on the port rail and some on the starboard rail and some strung out on deck wit' that endless line passin' from hand to hand, and Fat Dan tied to it.

"We carried Fat Dan to the port rail; we dropped him overside. I seen him trying to strike out and swim.

"'Yo, ho, ho,' sings the skipper; and the men at the starboard rail, they hauled away.

"Fat Dan went down; and I seen him under the water; his arms had quit movin' now; he was a-scrapin' along the ship's side. We paid out and the men on the other rail they hauled in; and the skipper yo ho-ho-ed for us. His voice kept cracking into a squeak like a rusty hinge.

"After a bit, 'Lively men,' sings the skipper, and well enough he said it, for when they hauled Fat Dan up the other side, the time was flying; and by the time we had him above water he was as limp and quiet as a drowned man. All hands of us went to the starboard rail and got him over; and he laid there in the scuppers wit' the water oozing out of his mouth.

"'Did ye get enough water?' says the little skipper, a-bendin' over him. But there was no use a-talkin' to Fat Dan just now. He'd sure got more than his share.

"'Leave him lay there,' says the skipper, and we left him. We hunted places on the deck to lay down ourselves, for this here work had left us weaker than little children, and all the tortures of hell was busy at us now—we was mad for water.

"Well, I'm spinnin' a windy yarn, mates. But there was one thing more I want to tell ye. A matter of an hour after Fat Dan's keelhauling, the man at the masthead yelled, 'Sail ho!' And this time it was the real thing. She'd sighted our distress signals, too, and she come for us. And wit' her come the breeze that we had been a-waitin' for. We seen it black on the water. The sight made us stronger.

"Well, the vessel was an Englishman, and she sent us plenty of stores—lime juice, raw onions and potatoes amongst them. Our troubles was done wit'. And we made New York easy enough from this time on.

"When we got to port, I went wit' the rest of the crew into a saloon to get a drink. Twelve of us, and every man wit' a glass of good wet beer. And just as we was a-raisin' our elbows, in comes Fat Dan. I remembered the promises them eleven Liverpool men had made him. And so did he, for his face showed it. He turned to go out again.

"Well, men, the little man wit' the long arms that had tried to do the knifing, made a run and got him by the shoulders. Fat Dan, he tried to break away; but 'twas no use. The little man whirled him around and he stood there shakin'.

"'Wot will we do wit' him?' says the little man.

"And the others just turned their backs and says, 'Leave him be. We got done wit' him. Enough is enough.'"

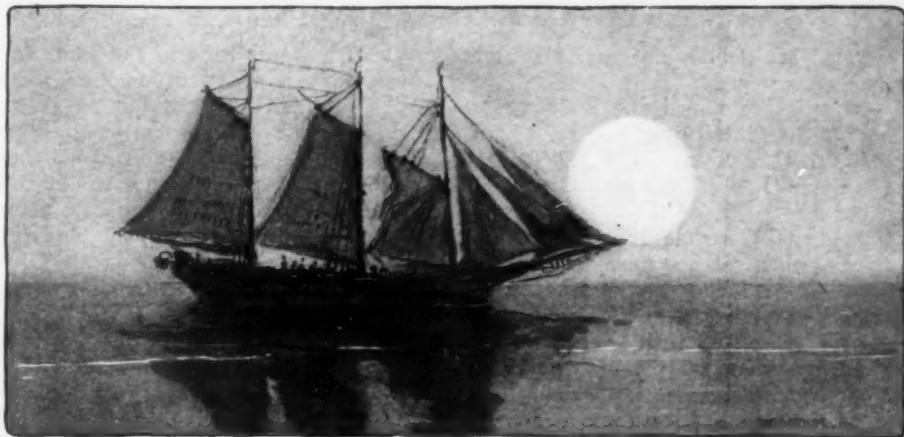
"And so the little man dropped his hold and Fat Dan, he went out. And that was the last I ever seen of him."

Duffy ceased talking and leaning back in his chair he smoked his black clay pipe. The other members of the circle

around Mother Monohan's stove puffed blue clouds of smoke in silence. At length—

"Keelhauling," said old Rose, "—pretty rough practice, that!"

"Aye," said Duffy quietly; "but ye can't use your parlor manners at a time like that—and wit' a man like that Fat Dan was."



DEBTS AND DREAMS

By IDA M. EVANS

CHARLEY HAMM, of the Paradise Feather Company, jumped from an Evanston Avenue car, and swung into Madame Gertrude's shop, wearing the pleasant smile due to an old friend and customer.

When he reached the cretonne-screened apartment in the rear, which was lunchroom, restroom and trimming-room for Madame Gertrude and her employees—when she had any—the smile froze.

Huddled among heaps of buckram

frames, bandeaux, paper boxes, scraps of velvet, bolts of straw, and pieces of wire, sat Madame Gertrude. He couldn't see her face because it was buried in a mass of lining silk. But he recognized the dark blue velvet dress and the coronet of golden-brown hair above it.

She was crying. Not in any ephemeral, April-shower way, but with fierce, I-don't-care-how-red-my-nose-gets abandon.

Charley softly slid his suitcase of imported aigrettes to the floor, and looked as melancholy as is possible for a man

who weighs two hundred and thirty pounds, sells twice as much every season as the firm expects, and has a digestive apparatus that is equal to caviar, lobster and Limburger all in the same night.

"Good Heavens, Gert!" he finally exploded. "Has your stepfather married again? Or have you got a soft corn? Or *what?*"

Madame Gertrude, panic-stricken, jumped up. Seeing who it was, she flopped down again.

"Oh! It's nobody but you. I thought it was a customer."

Then she resumed the crying as if nothing had interrupted it.

"Is there anything I can do?" begged Charley. "Or don't you feel able to talk about it?"

Madame Gertrude sobbed a minute longer; then sat up, rubbed her eyes—which were blue enough and black-fringed enough to be attractive in spite of the deluge—pulled a powder rag from somewhere, picked up a handglass from somewhere else, and dabbed viciously at a pink nose.

"If you can corral three hundred hatless women and send 'em in here with fifteen dollars apiece, you can help me. Otherwise—" She flung her hands out despairingly.

"So bad as that?" asked Charley pityingly.

"Worse. I owe every house on Michigan Avenue, from Fleck Brothers, where I got my French patterns, to Austin, who spent four hours one day palming off a lot of shoddy flowers on me. At the time he thought it was a slick trick, but he's yelped ever since like a dog that got in the way of a lawnmower."

"Sell out,"—cheerfully. "There never was a millinery store so punk but what some sucker would buy it."

"Can't. There's a chattel mortgage on the fixtures, and the landlord has threatened an attachment for the two last months' rent—though all he can attach is the brass name plate on the front door."

"Go into bankruptcy."

"I hate to!" sighed Madame Gertrude. "You see, I was able to get plenty of credit because I'd worked for Fleck Brothers nearly twelve years. They all

knew that I didn't have any cash. But old Henry Fleck told me to go ahead and buy all I wanted—he would risk my making good. So I simply can't turn round and hand him a bankruptcy notice for thank-you!"

"Had a fire sale yet?"

"I've had fire sales, after-Easter sales, rummage sales, making-ready-for-new-stock sales, before-and-after-inventory sales, and June-bride sales. And all I collected was bills for advertising."

"I wish I was back in the wholesale house, drawing my twenty-five per, forty weeks in the year, and nothing to do with my savings but go to summer resorts. And nothing on my mind but whether next season's styles would suit my profile! But—no! I couldn't see a good thing when it stared me in the face! I had to go day-dreaming about the business-of-my-own-and-no-one-to-boss-me idea! And here I am!"

"There is nothing so bad that it couldn't be worse," said Charley judiciously.

"Oh, of course, I could be in jail for debt," snapped Madame Gertrude. "That's where that squint-eyed little Austin threatened to put me. Claims I got goods from him under false pretenses. He happened to be side-squinting at a stack of bills face up on my desk, and spotted a big one from Fleck giving me ninety days' time. So he thought if my credit was good with Fleck Brothers, it was good enough for him, and he pestered me till I let him unload all the faded flowers he'd had left from two seasons."

"*That's* what he calls false pretenses! I told him to take the flowers back. But he wont. Threw up his hands and wailed with horror at the suggestion!"

"Don't you sell *anything*? This is a classy neighborhood—"

"On Monday I sold for *eight* dollars a hat that cost me *ten*! The woman who bought it had half a pint of real diamonds frescoed on her fingers and wrists. And she came in an automobile. She told me that gasoline cost so much and chauffeurs were so independent, she and her husband had to economize on everything they didn't really need, such as hats and clothes and food."

"Tuesday afternoon a high school girl came in and bought a wide-brimmed panama. But she changed her mind before she paid for it. Said she guessed she wouldn't take it, because hardly anyone wears hats in the summer.

"Wednesday—"

"Gert," broke in Charley Hamm, "chuck business, and marry me. I'm no millionaire, but my salary and commission will be some total this year—enough to rent a steam-heated flat and buy a four-passenger car."

"No,"—shortly. "Same as I told you last year and the year before, and the year before that."

"Well—*why?*"—explosively. "What have you got against me?"

"Nothing. I like you. But I was married *once*. And that is enough. All I got out of the incident was a spell of nervous prostration, a knowledge of the close connection between a man's affections and stomach—and a heartache."

"There's just as much difference in men as there is in—women,"—huffily.

"Sure. I wouldn't dream of contradicting you. But when you've ordered fish, and the waiter brings you one that's been out of cold-storage longer than it was in, you don't feel like taking a chance on a second order. You're more likely to call for a glass of Vichy to get the taste out of your mouth."

"Oh, well, *what* are you going to do—if it's any of my business!" Charley did not conceal his peevishness.

"I think, if only this store was in a better location—" she began wistfully.

"Shucks!"—rudely. "This is a poor year, and you've loaded yourself with poor stock. And I'll bet nine customers out of ten have asked for credit, and you've given it!"

Madame Gertrude acknowledged shamefacedly that if she could collect all that was coming to her, her debts would shrink to half.

"But they *won't* buy if they can't have credit," she complained in self-justification.

Charley looked at her absently—as though credit and customers were miles from his mind.

"Is it because I'm—well—sort of fat?" he asked humbly.

"Certainly not!" Her voice was emphatic to loudness. "I simply do not want to marry *anyone*. At least,"—she hesitated and blushed,—"*not until I get completely out of debt.*"

"Oh!" A pleased, comprehending expression diffused itself over his wide, smooth-shaven face. "You don't owe the Paradise Feather Company?"

"No—that's the reason I haven't bought from you this season. I was afraid that business might be poor—and I didn't want to—let *you* be stung."

"How much money would put you square?"

Madame Gertrude looked at him suspiciously. "You need *not* offer to lend me any,"—coldly. "I'd sooner go into bankruptcy—"

"My dear girl, I couldn't lend you fifty dollars. My expense account is so overdrawn that the old man chokes when he talks about it. But there was a woman in from Iowa the other day who is crazy to buy a millinery store on Evanston Avenue. She's got a few thousand dollars that she's bound to stick in the fire. So you might just as well have a pair of asbestos gloves handy."

"Does she know anything about millinery? Because, I wouldn't unload this on an amateur—my conscience wouldn't let me."

"She's been in business in Des Moines for eighteen years. Which is some experience, believe me. I used to sell goods in Iowa, and what an Iowa milliner doesn't know about trade you can lay on the point of a hatpin. How much did you say you'd need?"

Madame Gertrude counted first on her fingers; then she found a pencil stub and a scrap of paper.

"First thing to do would be to shoot a collector after your outstanding accounts," Charley said. "So count half of 'em as assets. I know a fellow that could collect a missionary contribution from an atheist. But we'll only hope for half."

When she had finished, he looked critically over the figures.

"Then, if she will pay three thousand dollars, you can settle with Austin, Fleck Brothers, the landlord, take care of the mortgage on the fixtures, and have

about five hundred dollars left over."

"Oh!" sighed Madame Gertrude. "It would be like heaven—just to wake up in the morning without that big black elephant of debt staring at me! All the same,"—determinedly—"I shall explain the *exact* situation to her! I won't take her money under false pretenses."

"Of course not," soothed Charley. "I'll send that collector out this afternoon for the names."

Then he got an Evanston Avenue car, transferred to a Belmont, and rode west to a piece of land that three months before had been a stretch of tin cans, but now was proudly wearing three finished bungalows and five partly built. In front of the farthest one, a tall, tired-eyed woman was setting out geranium plants.

She smiled at Charley Hamm with unconcealed surprise. "My! I never thought that you'd be coming to call on me again! Did I forget to pay the Paradise Feather Company—or—"

"I guess you're not worried about any forgotten bills," he laughed. "I want you to do me a favor, Mrs. Grant. I want you to buy a millinery store on Evanston Avenue—"

"Not while I have my senses," vowed Mrs. Grant. "I had a store in Des Moines for eighteen years, and I spent the last ten trying to lose it. I ruined my eyesight, sizzled my temper, rasped my nerves, and went color-blind trying to trim hats that would make sour-faced, middle-aged women with skins speckled like a turkey egg, and four chins, look like Elsie Janis as the *Slim Princess*."

"And whenever I sold a hat to one of that tribe, in she'd come the next day before I'd found my thimble and say her husband didn't like it. Believe me, trying to get together the combination of feathers, ribbon, and brim that a woman wants and that her husband says she can wear, and fixing the price half way between what she is willing to pay and what *he* will give her to pay, causes more brain fag than a third-term candidate. And now ~~that~~ I've crawled out of the whirlpool, you ask me to hop back in."

"Just for a week or so. I'll be the real owner, but I've got reasons for not wanting my name known."

And then he explained, fully and at length. He had known Mrs. Grant before she began to dye her hair.

"And you're willing to lose a large share of three thousand dollars! Charley, your heart's as big as your waist!"

Charley Hamm couldn't blush. He had lost the trick along about the third year of carrying a suitcase. But he avoided Mrs. Grant's admiring eyes.

"Can you go over this afternoon?" he asked. "I'd like to cinch it while she's in the notion."

It took five minutes for Mrs. Grant to wash her muddy hands and change from a gingham house dress into a gray tailored suit.

They went downtown first. Mr. Austin was in the humor to be reasoned with. He admitted, after Charley Hamm told him what he thought of him and his ancestors and his way of doing business, that he'd be tickled to death to get sixty per cent of the price that he had asked Madame Gertrude for fifty boxes of season-old flowers.

Then they went out to Evanston Avenue.

Madame Gertrude nervously insisted that Mrs. Grant should know every detail of bad luck and bad management that had befallen her during her two years' ownership.

"You'd make a peach of a salesman—I *don't think!*" Charley snorted in disgust, while Mrs. Grant was inspecting a showcase of plumes. "If you'll keep still—"

"I won't have her cheated!"—firmly.

"*Don't* worry. If you'd talked hats as many years as I have to Melissa Grant, you'd know that the chances of her being cheated are about as large as Austin's chance of being presented at the Russian court."

"Well!" announced Mrs. Grant blandly, when she had inspected fixtures, stock and books, "I don't know as I can do any better. I like the location, and I think all the store needs is a person with some gumption. When can I take possession?"

"To-morrow!" Madame Gertrude said promptly. "But—are you sure—"

"Wouldn't be surer in a thousand years,"—decidedly.

The next day, after inventory had been taken, and the bill of sale made out, Charley drew twenty-five hundred dollars from the bank. What he had told Madame Gertrude concerning his expense account was quite true. But he dealt more tenderly with his salary.

He gave the money to Mrs. Grant, who took it out to Madame Gertrude—that lady having conscientiously refused to accept more.

The collector—as Charley had estimated—brought in half that he went after, and promised to get the remainder before the month was out. Austin's reduction took off a large slice. So when everything was paid and Mrs. Grant had the key, Madame Gertrude was four hundred and fifty dollars to the good.

Her eyes shone, and her cheeks were pink with delight. If Charley hadn't known her for fourteen years, he would have guessed her age at twenty-four instead of the thirty she owned to.

He didn't try to see her for two days. He was busy looking around for steam-heated flats, and besides, he thought a day or two of reflection would strengthen her gratitude to the man who had helped her dodge bankruptcy. For Austin wouldn't have given her more than another week.

The evening of the second day he couldn't wait any longer. He bought a new tie, and a pair of tan oxfords, and told the barber to make the check as big as possible. Then he went out to Ken-

more Avenue, where Madame Gertrude lived with her married sister.

She was sitting on the front porch. Her dress was white and cut low-necked. Charley Hamm's heart beat faster than it had since he landed his first big order.

He dropped into a rocking-chair beside her. From where he sat, he could see the lights of a tall apartment building whose bathrooms, consoles, gas stoves and chandeliers were the latest offerings to modern taste.

"Well," he began tenderly, "does it seem lonesome without a business of your own?"

"It did—yesterday," she confessed. The light that streamed from an adjacent window enabled Charley to see a deep blush spread over her face.

"How about to-day?" asked Charley, and carefully suppressed a happy smile that tried to creep over his face.

"To-day," said Madame Gertrude in a low-constrained tone, "I simply couldn't bear it any longer. I saw an ad in the paper of a shop for sale on Wilson Avenue—a lovely shop, only three thousand dollars."

"And you looked at it?"—uneasily.

"I bought it!"—triumphantly. "She took the four hundred and fifty dollars as first payment and my notes for the rest. I have a year's time on them. And since I don't owe Fleck Brothers any more, they let me have more stock on ninety days' time. Honest, Charley, isn't it just fine?"



Red Hair and Black

*A love story
of New York*

by

CHARLES
NEVILLE
BUCK

ILLUSTRATED BY EDMUND FREDERICK

HARKINS snuggled his Astrakhan collar about his throat with as contented a sigh as though all the world loved him for himself alone. His eyes darted with approval about the familiar green and gilt and onyx details of the café's balconied interior.

"New York," he pronounced verdict as he led his dinner-guest through the revolving door into the hurry of Long-acre Square, "is the head of the hemisphere—a little rouged and powdered, I grant you, but very fair—and Broadway is her tiara."

But the dinner-guest failed to enthuse: to be exact, he grunted. "A tiara of paste jewels," he particularized ungraciously.

For Harkins, the city's doors fell invitingly open to the countersign of affluence, but Stillworth, without that sesame, knew that what he had from New York, he must take, and as yet New York had only taken from him. Whether his dwindling commisariat could outlast the siege depended on whether his Blucher of literary recognition should arrive in time to affect a rescue. It seemed scarcely an even bet, and this realization colored his point of view.

Harkins straightened his shoulders and fixed his hat at an aggressive tilt.

"You make me tired," he announced almost savagely. "You demonstrated that you had the right idea when you chucked the measly job out West and came on here to try your luck in a real town. Did you expect Mayor Gaynor to be at the Pennsylvania Station with an escort of Waldo's best, and a committee of prominent publishers to spread a carpet to the taxi? All you've got to do is to stick around awhile and write some successful novels and plays and things. —Here we are at the theatre."

Stillworth smiled inwardly at the one-syllable recipe for fame and wealth which in a word swept away all complexities. "With such instruction," he acceded gravely, "anyone could do it."

"Here you get the best that's to be had," persisted the self-constituted booster of Manhattan's sovereignty, when they were seated in their orchestra chairs. "If you go to a show, you have your money's worth, even before the curtain has been rung up. You see people whose names make the day's news: men who control finance; artists whose work inspires your own; women who do not follow fashions but who make them."

"I am looking," replied Stillworth. "I see a great deal of garnished sophistication; a great deal of arrogant artifice. What I don't see is one girl with starry eyes or fresh cheeks—cheeks that could blush from inside. I don't see one woman worth looking at the second time—and so I'm going to read the ad's in the program." But he did nothing of the sort. His wandering eyes stopped before they had quite fallen to the level of the program, and remained fixed on a lower left-hand box.

A girl was sitting toward its front, between two men who bent toward her and seemed engaged in a laudable effort to amuse her. Constant sallies of laughter from the other occupants of the box paid tribute to the quality of their epigrams. But the girl herself seemed to smile only in deference to the demands of courtesy, and even so perfunctory a demonstration appeared to cost her an effort.

She was slender and young and wholly beautiful, and her eyes had the violet light which Stillworth had so sweepingly denied the women about him. Her lips, too, were things of subtle and



Her hair instead of being black was—red. Her brows and lashes were as deeply black as Miss Thomas.

witching curves—fashioned, he sentimentally told himself, for laughter and kisses. But from the jeweled band that went around her black and heavily massed hair, to the slender fingers that twisted her program, a seeming of listlessness and soulless lassitude characterized her bearing.

"I take it back," said Stillworth; "there is one woman here who is marvelous, and yet for all her flawless young beauty, she is hard as a gate. You could make an impression on one of her diamonds more easily than on her heart. Her charm is dead because it is not human. It's a mockery, like the feast of Tan-talus. Her soul has atrophied."

He paused a moment, studying her with contracted brow; then he went on: "Now, if you could fancy her, precisely as she is

—yet totally different—standing somewhere in blossoming woods with a gingham dress—and no jewelry—and a sun-bonnet hanging down from her shoulders—and her lips parted, and all the enthusiasm of springtime in her eyes—then—" He drew a long breath and added fervently, "Then you would have some girl."



A girl was sitting toward the front of the box between two men who were engaged in a laudable effort to amuse her. beautiful. Her eyes had the violet light which Stillworth had so sweepingly denied the women about him. From the seeming of listlessness and soulless



But the girl seemed to smile only in deference to the demand of courtesy. She was slender, and young, and wholly jeweled band that went around her black and heavily massed hair, to the slender fingers that twisted her program, a lassitude characterized her bearing.

"Your requirements are too pastoral for local standards," smiled Harkins. "I guess if you ever saw that lady standing under a sunbonnet in an upstate orchard, the sunbonnet would have been made on Fifth Avenue, and the trees would be painted on the backdrop for some charity show at the Plaza."

"Precisely," commented Stillworth dryly.

"But how did you size her up so accurately?" queried Harkins. "That's her reputation you know. She is witty, but satirical. Her heart, if she has one, lies still undiscovered behind arctic ice floes. And, believe me, there have been some dashes for the pole. If that young woman's income were poured out, in gold, through a rain-pipe, and you were foolish enough to stand under it, it would mangle and bury you in about two minutes and a half."

"Maybe she's been standing under it," suggested Stillworth as the curtain rose. But for all his cool criticism he found his eyes, as the act progressed, deserting the stage to wander across the darkened house and seek out the lower left-hand box. There, in the dimness, the other figures were vaguely swallowed up, but the white oval of the girl's face, and the lines of her delicately rounded throat and shoulders remained visible, like luminous ivory against a curtain of black velvet.

So neglectful did he become of the doings across the footlights that his friend, when the intermission brought back the orchestra, permitted himself a few satirical comments. Stillworth retorted with some heat.

"It's just that she irritates me," he exclaimed. "It's a sin against eternal fitness, that a woman who comes so near being wonderful still should miss it because she has no soul to show through her eyes. It's like an exquisitely wrought locket, which you open to find empty."

"All lockets are empty until you put something in them," defended Harkins. "I don't know her well, and I admit I'm afraid of her, but it's not because she is empty. It's because she is too devilishly clever."

"Cleverness isn't soul," Stillworth answered irritably. "It makes me angry.

I've been looking for years for some one who is just my idea of what a woman should be. I would make any pilgrimage to see such a woman, with no more idea of possessing her for myself than the Moslem devotee has of bringing Mecca home with him. And there she sits, tantalizing my eye with all except the one most essential thing."

Harkins had never understood his friend. He did not understand him now. He had simply liked him loyally since they had been Freshmen together at Harvard, where the one had been proclaimed a good fellow despite his wealth, the other despite his brains: both had been popular and neither conceited.

"Tell me about this girl," commanded Stillworth. "Tell me all you know about her."

"Why," inquired Harkins, blandly, "don't you read your Sunday papers? They usually provide an Eleanor Thomas section, illustrated with portraits of her in evening gowns, in tennis clothes, in riding togs, in motor goggles, in bathing suits—she has the good looks and the accomplishments that go with each kind. She is the only daughter of old John Thomas, who could—but wont—take you from here to 'Frisco on his own railroads. She is twenty-five years old and a spinster."

"No," disdainfully objected Stillworth; "that's not what I want to know. Tell me some real things about her."

"It is rumored that she has little or no sympathy with the old man's laudable activities, which concern themselves with acquiring and disbursing," went on Harkins. "The first he achieves through directors, senators, cabinet ministers and judges. The second through charities and distributing agencies. His daughter disdains all these enthusiasms."

"Never mind," sighed Stillworth, "that's not at all what I want to know; I was after the human side. As you say, I can get all that from the papers."

"My dear fellow," his host assured him, "even the most versatile persons lack something, and with her it's the human side."

But an idea which fell upon Stillworth's mind was, often to his great annoyance, certain to grow and fructify.

When he had bidden Harkins good-night, and walked down Fifth Avenue and crossed Washington Square, and climbed the dark stairs to his lodging on the south side, the ivory oval of Miss Thomas' beautiful face still floated mockingly before his eyes.

It seemed humorously paradoxical that these features should insist on following him into the incongruously dingy walls of an apartment leased for the dominating and sole consideration of cheapness. The episode assumed an importance greater than mere irritation, in that a distractingly pretty face had lacked something essential. It was as though a long cherished ideal had fallen, and the disappointment stuck burr-like in his brain and troubled him.

He was, perhaps, a sentimentalist. Harkins had frequently assured him that this romanticism would pass with a few more months in New York. But Stillworth, who had already carried his creed through a bruising newspaper experience, preferred to believe that he could preserve it in a city which places, at its sea door, a goddess holding aloft a torch of ideals.

Why should he worry himself, he demanded, with the one thing denied this daughter of too-great wealth? The things denied him came closer home. He stood confronted by sheer necessity and battle for a foothold in life. His feet were in the Rubicon, and beyond the Rubicon in his jumbled and converted geography loomed Parnassus. Still as he turned out the gas and stretched himself on the couch, which screeched dolefully under his weight, he made confession to the darkness: "None the less, I shall not get her out of my thoughts until I see some one who looks very much like her—and very different."

The next morning Stillworth was aroused from foolish dreams by a knock on his door. On the threshold appeared the hulking and unprepossessing son of Madame, the landlady, bearing a suit case, and a note.

"A gink wot looked like a cross between a grizzly bear and a traffic cop left this here stuff fer you," explained the messenger. "He come in a green car as big as the *Lusitania*, an' said he was

Mr. Harkins' shofer. He didn't seem stuck on our joint."

Stillworth, still clad in pajamas, opened the note. It was from Harkins:

I've decided, on the spur of the moment, to run down to Bermuda with a party of friends—sail this afternoon—and write to say good-by and incidentally to ask a favor. I've got a nag standing up at Garland's stables eating his head off, and there's nobody to exercise him while I'm away. When I get back, I shall need him with the Meadowbrook Hunt and if I find him stiff in the legs and short-winded, how shall I be in at the death of the anise-seed bag? He's rather a decent sort of brute and takes some handling. I'd prefer not to trust him to heavy-handed stable boys. Your misanthropic line of converse last night indicated a torpid liver which is not good for your soul's welfare. It will benefit you, as well as the horse, to gallop him in the park every day or two. So, you'll have to do it.

At the bottom was a postscript.

It occurred to me that, not keeping a horse in town, you may have left your riding togs out West, so I'm sending down some extra things of mine. We're about the same size, and, if you're not too haughty to wear my clothes, they will serve your purpose.

Early that afternoon, after having wrestled vainly with a short story which wouldn't work out properly, Stillworth prepared to go riding, and his cracked mirror showed him that Mr. Harkins' wardrobe had served to transform his somewhat shabby-genteel person into the counterfeit of a gentleman of fashion bent on taking his pleasure in the park. Mr. Stillworth was, to the eye of the beholder, one of the idle rich.

After two hours on the bridle path, his blood was pleasantly booming. His mount had demonstrated an exhilarating contempt for traffic regulations and speed limits, so Stillworth climbed the stairs of the "L" Station at Sixty-sixth Street in an improved and invigorated frame of mind. He told himself that life had its compensations and Parnassus seemed less steep and slippery.

Then as he pushed his way into the train and seated himself, something to

tally unexpected made him sit up suddenly and fall to staring. He stared so fixedly and intently that the eyes which were the innocent cause of his inward excitement met his own and rebuked him with the realization that he *was* staring.

There just across the car sat, except for coloring and expression, an exact replica of Eleanor Thomas. Yet it was not so much the remarkable similarity as the cardinal dissimilarity which had compelled Stillworth's admiring gaze.



"Alas," he said, "I am no longer a glass of fashion, but this is the real I. The other man had merely been riding a borrowed steed, in borrowed finery."

"In that event," she smiled, "I need no longer be afraid of you."

This woman had the vivid color of a live and sympathetic soul, whereas her famous counterpart had seemed devitalized. Her hair, instead of being black, was a rather unusual shade of brown-red, though her brows and lashes were as deeply black as Miss Thomas'. Her eyes were the same vivid blue, but they seemed in turn deeper and lighter as they mirrored swiftly passing thoughts. Her clothes were not mean, but extremely simple, and, in the blue suit, which fitted her figure neatly, one could divine that feminine care which makes the utmost of limited resources.

Yet these differences were merely material, and there was a greater one which was also more intangible.

She sat with several packages in her lap, and her expression was sweetly plaintive. Her lips drooped at one corner, as though her thoughts were fixed with deep sympathy on something that savored of pathos. And under its influence her face fell into more gracious lines than a smile could have bestowed.

The Something was there, which in the girl of last night's box party had been missing.

Stillworth realized that his stare must have been, to her obvious sensitiveness, offensive. He could not hope that it had escaped her, for under it her own eyes had dropped. He scowled with self-accusation, as it occurred to him that in Harkins' almost too smart riding togs he was seemingly an idle and self-indulgent pleasure seeker. This girl seemed poor, and she might share the opinion held by some in that state, that men of his seeming sort regard themselves free to ogle unescorted women.

And yet, realizing this, and wishing for an opportunity to apologize, he could not keep his eyes from straying now and again to a repetition of the offense.

Indeed, so absorbed had he become, that he passed his own station at Eighth Street and went on to Bleecker. Perhaps Bleecker Street, too, would have been passed, except that here the young woman herself arose and gathered together her bundles.

But his affairs were now on the knees of the gods and in a few minutes more he had washed his hands of all personal

responsibility. Down the stairs of the "L" station rushed a number of other people, and at the street level some one collided with the girl and caused her to drop one of her parcels. Stillworth retrieved it, and she accepted it from him with a puzzled expression and a murmur of thanks but with no smile.

The absence of the smile distressed, but did not surprise him. She walked rapidly west, through the crowded, pushcart infested region of Italian tenements, and he, since his way lay west also, followed.

They passed basement *Ristorantes Italianos* and squalid junk-shops and made detours around great, jute wrapped packages that cumbered the sidewalks. He knew that she believed him to be following her, and his sense of guilt was onerous.

At Macdougall Street a half dozen begrimed and curly headed children were playing under the roaring piers and girders of the Elevated and dodging between the wheels of trucks and wagons with the nimble immunity of youngsters whose playgrounds are the streets and whose "prisoners' bases" are the gutters.

As the girl paused at the crossing for the traffic to leave an opening, a small boy, hard pressed by his fellows, rushed out, his dark Neapolitan eyes cast backward at his pursuers, and collided with the front wheel of a clattering coal van. Falling almost at their feet, he turned and struggled vainly to wriggle out of harm's way, then lay still, groaning horribly, as the wheel crushed a small leg, and the frightened driver leaped down from his high seat.

With a low, smothered cry of distress, the girl was instantly on her knees in the dirt and grime of the street, holding the child's limp body in her arms and his pallid face on her breast as he lapsed mercifully into unconsciousness.

"Let me have him," Stillworth commanded quickly, stooping and lifting the light burden of the hurt child, as he cast his eyes about for a place of available refuge. On the nearest corners were a saloon and a vacant store-room, but across the way was a drug-store bearing on the window the words, "*Farmacia Italiana*."

The Italian temperament of the neighborhood had already broken into volatile outburst. As he crossed the street with the girl at his elbow, he was followed by a crowd which, with incredible swiftness, grew in volume and clamor. They jostled him, shrieking indignant abuse of jumbled English and foreign epithets at the van-driver, who had left his wagon and followed. The teamster, shaken and driven back on an attitude of self defense, brandished his heavy whip stock and retorted with profane vehemence. Violence threatend to follow accident. And then on the door of the drug-store Stillworth saw a knot of crêpe and a card written in Italian. The place was tight locked.

He turned again, now much hampered by the gesticulating, shouting loiterers, and started hurriedly up Macdougall Street.

"Come in here," whispered the girl, and turning in obedience, he hastened with her down a dirty flight of basement stairs into the nearest shop, an ill lighted and unventilated place below the street level.

The van-driver, who had followed at their heels, wheeled to slam the door in the faces of the crowd, and holding his heavy foot against it, succeeded in bolting it, while Stillworth cleared a space at the far end of the narrow room and laid the boy down in as much comfort as the make-shift permitted. The young woman, pale but perfectly self-possessed, was trying to make the aged Pole, whose shop had been so summarily invaded, understand that he must telephone for medical and police assistance. Meanwhile, outside the door increasing confusion and babel told of a brewing riot, and through the glass of the dingy window came several stones.

"Leave him with me," instructed the girl. "Talk to them; try to quiet them. Can't you get a policeman?" she added in a distressed tone.

Stillworth, strangely out of the picture as he opened and blocked the murky door of the basement shop, recognized that haranguers outside were inflaming the tinder-like spirit of the crowd, and that already one or two knives flashed at the outskirts

But at his appearance, to his great astonishment and immeasurable relief, a partial lull fell over their babel, and they reluctantly yielded him the respect due to one in authority. Then he realized that in their illiterate minds his boots and breeches were confused with a uniform of some sort, and clothed him with the color and effect of command. He seized the advantage and talked. He told them that the van-driver was no longer in the place. This was true, since he had found a rear exit, and gone to summon help. Stillworth explained that inside was an injured child who must be left in quiet.

For a while the situation seemed perilous, and, although those in front quieted to an incoherent growl under the man's authoritative manner, and made no effort to rush him, several missiles, thrown by those far enough away to escape easily, fell about him, and one or two struck him harmlessly.

At last, the ambulance and police arrived and Stillworth found himself standing on the cleared pavement with the young woman and two patrolmen, who were asking for names and addresses. As he handed the officers his card, he heard the girl say that her name was Alice Murray, but he did not catch the street or the house number.

"Do you live near here?" he inquired, when the clang of the ambulance bell "No,"—she shook her head—"I live—" She hesitated, then added vaguely, "Uptown."

The man's brain was working fast just now. The conviction was borne in upon him that the episode was closed, and that unless he could speedily invent some further need for his presence, the cue for his exit from the scene would be in order.

"What became of your parcels?" he demanded with sudden inspiration.

She looked up and shook her head indifferently. "I must have lost them," she said. They had reached the corner of Washington Square, graciously open and clean in contrast with the squalor of the tenements.

"Will you wait here, and rest, while I go back and look for them?" he suggested.

But again she shook her head and smiled. "They aren't worth it," she assured him. "They were only some trifles I was taking to a sick child." Then she added: "It's too late now to do two things and I want to go to the hospital. I want to see—" She shuddered, then added determinedly, "whether they will have to amputate."

The man marked the quick and sincere play of light and shade in her eyes and how they grew deeply pained over the possibility of the operation table.

"They took him to St. Vincent's; it's just over here,"—he waved his hand toward the north-east. "I'm interested too. Please let me show you the way."

She hesitated a moment and her voice hinted of indecision. "I've been there often," she answered, but after a brief silence, she added, as her eyes changed color with a flash of covert amusement. "I'm glad it occurred to you to ask permission. I had begun to think—" Again she broke off and in a moment conceded generously: "After all, if you hadn't been there it would have been rather horrible. He might have been hurt much worse in a riot."

Stillworth spoke gravely. "What you had begun to think was a mistake. Please don't finish thinking it."

When they had come in sight of the barrack-like, cross-surmounted pile of St. Vincent's he said, with an effort at casual interest, "You spoke of a sick child and some gifts. Are you actively interested in charity?" It was so palpable that she had little out of which to bestow largesse, that his curiosity must needs seek satisfying. She looked up at him with disconcerting frankness and laughed, her eyes reading him like type.

"You are wondering how I do it, aren't you?" she demanded. "You are thinking that I hardly look the Lady Bountiful."

"Oh, I beg of you—" he began in confusion, but she laughed deliciously.

"I suppose I might be called a variety of agent," she explained. "A few wealthy people commission me to investigate and help worthy cases. I love it,"—her voice grew tenderly serious. "Do you remember *Sir Launfal*?" she suddenly demanded.

He nodded.

"Do you recall how, when he took up his quest in unscarred mail..."

As Sir Launfal made morn through
the darksome gate,
Who begged with his hand and
moaned as he sate—
He was aware of a leper crouched by
the same,
And seemed the one blot on the sum-
mer morn—
So he tossed him a piece of gold in
scorn.

The girl repeated the lines not only with her lips but with her heart, and as she paused questioningly the man took up the quotation.

"I remember," he said, rather eagerly,

The leper raised not the gold from
the dust.
Better to me the poor man's crust,
Better the blessing of the poor—

"Yes," she said in a low tone, "it was only when *Sir Launfal* had despaired in his quest of the Grail, and crouched, himself a beggar by the portcullis, when 'another lord in his earldom sate'—that he learned the secret of giving. Then he divided a crust."

The man looked down and saw that her cheeks were pink with enthusiasm. His own voice was vibrant with delighted discovery as he answered:

"That's the only worth-while charity. You give your time and youth and energies. The others merely write checks." He added contemptuously: "Take that old robber Thomas, for example; he salves his conscience by giving away a contemptible fraction of what he has stolen. He corrupts governments and puts his trade mark on charities."

A half hour later they had emerged from the grilled doorway of St. Vincent's. In Stillworth's nostrils still lurked the aseptic odor of disinfectants.

"May I call a taxi, and take you home?" he asked. But she refused. "You are only to see me as far as the 'L' station," she smiled.

His face fell dolefully.

"But surely I may see you again?" There was an appeal in his voice which he could not repress, and after a moment she graciously relieved his anxiety.



The next day, riding again in the park, Stillworth passed the limousine of Money Despot John Thomas. He recognized the Croesus both because, in life, he did not flatter his newspaper caricatures, and because beside him sat his daughter, her beautiful face marred by a world-weary disdain. "Chug on, fair damsel," he facetiously murmured. "I know a girl that's got you beaten sixty ways from the ace, and I am going to see her to-morrow."



"I shall be here Thursday afternoon at three. If you care to be here too—"

"I care to," Mr. Stillworth assured her.

At the foot of the elevated stairs he stood stock still and gazed into space. He did not know that his enthusiasm was breaking into open utterance, until an elderly gentleman paused and said, "I beg your pardon? Did you speak to me?" Stillworth stammered but also he laughed. "No, sir," he responded, "I didn't know that I had spoken aloud. I merely observed, 'Eureka.'"

"In that case," said the elderly gentleman, "pray allow me to congratulate you."

The next day, riding again in the park, Stillworth passed the limousine of Money Despot John Thomas. He recognized the Croesus, both because, in life, he did not flatter his newspaper caricatures, and because beside him sat his daughter, her beautiful face marred by a world-weary disdain.

"Chug on, haughty damsel," he facetiously murmured, as he shook his mount into a gallop. "I know a girl that's got you beaten sixty ways from the ace, and I'm going to see her to-morrow."

As they left the hospital together on the next afternoon, the man noticed that his companion was regarding him with a somewhat puzzled expression, and as its meaning dawned on him he laughed.

"It's now my turn for mind-reading," he told her. "You are wondering which is I and which is the masquerader. The other day you met a distinctly tailor-made young man, and to-day he has faded to a hand-me-down. Alas, I am no longer a glass of fashion, but this is the real I. The other man had merely been riding a borrowed steed in borrowed finery."

"In that event," she smiled, "I need no longer be afraid of you. You escape the suspicion of cultivating my acquaintance with the idle curiosity of a rich man who is slumming."

"These little chaps in there are well cared for," he suggested a moment later.

"Yes," she agreed, "the children's ward is one of the pet beneficiaries of John Thomas."

Stillworth snorted. "I resent that," he

said. "I don't like to think of any of that robber-baron clan participating in this kid's welfare at all."

Her blue eyes opened wide in amazement. "But that's so foolish," she argued. "Why do you feel that?"

"Some day," he answered, "I'll tell you, and you'll agree with me."

But he had seen her many days before he explained. He had accompanied her on delectable tours into garlic reeking tenements where the squalor was invisible to his eyes because they could see only rosy things through the glamour of her presence. He had told her all about himself and had, in exchange of confidence, learned that her ambition pictured a small studio somewhere where she could try to paint. She had once studied art a little. She refused to allow him to call, explaining that her present quarters were in a boarding-house, but she promised that "when her ship came in" he might drink tea in her studio. There were times when the grave woman he had first met disappeared and when in her place he had for his companion a merry, mirth-loving girl, who seemed but yesterday to have said good-by to childhood.

There were times when her eyes forgot to cloud and her lips to droop, and when he found it impossible to think of anything except her sheer, lissome beauty. Neither of them ever spoke of the thing called Love, save to discuss it with cynical wisdom in the abstract. Like hundreds before them, they pretended to believe in the genuineness of that insidious old counterfeit who passes under the alias of Platonic Friendship, as utterly fictional a character as John Doe.

Of course he told her of the ideal he had set up and of how Eleanor Thomas, "when she looked like a queen in her box that night" had ruthlessly struck it down. He did not tell her that she had herself replaced it, and added to it new glories. Some day he would tell that, unless after all it was too obvious to need stating.

She remained a long time silent when he told that story, then spoke in defense of the other woman.

"Perhaps, after all," she said, "Miss

Thomas is only unfortunate. Perhaps it is just because she *has* a spark of soul that she seems hard. She may realize that she has no way of testing her friendships; that it is only her gilded affluence which draws people to her, and that she can never trust them—or know them. That might embitter one, don't you think?"

But Stillworth shook his head in stubborn dissent.

"You hold a brief for everybody who is assailed," he declared. "You can't possibly understand a girl of her empty and artificial type."

"That," said Miss Murray resolutely, "is merely flattering me at the expense of another woman, and it's poor flattery. If Miss Thomas were merely soulless, her riches would satisfy her. Her face would be that of a vacuous doll. Discontent comes from thinking. In the old fairy stories the beautiful princess was always laid under an evil spell, which could not be broken until Prince Charming came. Miss Thomas is immured in a castle with a moat of artifice, and a wall of sham, and a drawbridge of insincerity, and I believe her face is unhappy and hard, if you like, because she despairs of any modern Prince Charming being able to break in and rescue her."

And finally, under these gracious influences, there arrived an unforgettable day when an editor bought some manuscripts, and asked for more. Stillworth met her that same afternoon—an afternoon, as it happened, when the earliest breath of spring was coaxing out young buds on the box hedges along lower Fifth Avenue.

"We are going to celebrate by taking a ride," he declared with boyish enthusiasm, as he grandly waved his bamboo stick to a passing taxi. "And we are



She carried in one hand a large picture hat. Her hair was not red but black, and her face wore an expression of heart sickness.

going to stop at a florist's, and you are going to wear an orchid or two and I a carnation—a white one."

She laughed indulgently. "But isn't it wickedly extravagant?" she demurred.

"That is why it is perfectly delectable," he retorted.

"I also have a secret to tell you," she confided when they had settled back in the somewhat service-scarred motor. "I have rented my studio. My value as charitable agent has been recognized with a salary. I said nothing about it, until it was ready, because I wanted to surprise you. Shall we go and see it?"

In the studio, he felt vaguely that, wonderful as it all was, it was not wonderful enough. He was ready, for his part, to denounce as an impostor old Platonic Friendship, yet his allegiance had been so unquestioning that he paused in a selection of method. His brow wrinkled over a cup of tea.

"See here," he demanded, "we have become pretty good pals, haven't we?"

Her voice was very soft as she answered, "I hope so."

"You are not sorry, are you, that when I saw the Thomas girl, my ideals were not fulfilled—I mean, you are not sorry that I had to go on searching until I found you?"

She said nothing, but she had hardly the appearance of a young woman who was deeply sorry about anything.

"And you always defend her—though if it had been otherwise I should never have known how much I needed you," he complained.

"Perhaps that is all quite true," she smiled, "and yet it is as well to be charitable. I am sorry for her. How can she ever have the most important thing that can come into a woman's life?"

"What is that?" he eagerly asked.

"I think," she answered slowly, "it is her privilege of coming into the life of the man she loves, while his fight is still on: of helping him in the struggle. Unless she can do that she is merely a camp-follower. Now, Miss Thomas—"

Stillworth had come suddenly to his feet. His eyes were glowing.

"Never mind Miss Thomas—she doesn't count," he interrupted. "Say that again. Do you really believe it?"

The girl nodded. "I know it."

"Thank God," he exclaimed.

He came over and took both her hands in his. "My ideal hasn't changed, dearest," he said humbly, "except that it has added some qualities I have discovered in you. My ideal is you. I repudiate friendship—I love you. You must know that, but let me say it anyhow. I love you."

He had lifted her from her chair and was holding her close. Suddenly the gravity of his voice broke into youthful buoyance.

"Dearest," he exclaimed, "I've got one of the swellest, roughest scraps ahead of me you ever saw. Every editor and creditor on earth is lined up against me. Wont you come into my corner and coach me?" It was not, perhaps, the most distinguished proposal in the annals of courtship, but she lifted her face and nodded, and then they both laughed, with ridiculous happiness.

Presently, however, she drew away from him and stood in an attitude of sudden and deep distress. Her posture grew almost rigid, and her hands went to her breast as though a sharp pain had attacked her heart.

"What is it?" he cried, stretching out his arms, but she motioned him back.

"Wait," she said at last, "wait here." She turned and left him, disappearing into a small room at one side.

For a time the man stood in bewilderment, his face full of perplexed distress.

He paced the floor for fifteen miserable minutes. Then the door opened. In it stood a woman wrapped in expensive furs. She carried in one hand, which hung hopelessly at her side, a large picture hat that swept the floor. Her hair was not red but black, and her face wore an expression of absolute heartsickness. It was not the woman of the "L" train and the tenements, but the woman of the theatre box.

She came forward and stood guiltily before Stillworth and shook her head. Then the lips drooped at one corner and her expression changed suddenly, so that despite the tight coiled black hair, it was again the face of Alice Murray.

"That's all," she said dully. "We are one girl."

The man stood for a moment, as though stricken.

"So it was a game," he said quietly.

He walked dumbly over and mechanically picked up his hat and coat and cane. "It was all very wonderful," he went on, speaking in a slow, lifeless voice,—"until the point of the joke was made manifest."

The girl laid her hand on his arm. Her eyes were tearless but very tense.

"Don't you understand?" she asked. "Can't you see that everything was empty, insupportable for me? Can't you see that one can't fill all life with artifice? I turned to these small charities, but I met only grafters. The daughter of John Thomas might give millions, but no single recipient would let her peep into their lives. They took it all and still hated me. I didn't want simply to give. The secretaries and boards were doing that. I wanted really to help. I wanted their sympathy and love. Can't you see that after I started I wasn't giving just for cold charity? I loved them—"

She paused for breath and Stillworth stood silently waiting.

"I had been called a clever actress. I decided to use my capacity for make-up to some purpose. I decided to go among these people as some one who did not live in another and remote planet. If the

daughter of John Thomas was barred from their hearts I would be—simply Alice Murray. Then I met you—and I couldn't spare you. I can't spare you now. Does taking off a red wig and a faded dress take me out of your heart, too?"

Stillworth caught her hand and bent forward.

"Out of my heart; no. Not even you can do that, but out of my world, yes. I proposed, as a pauper, to a poor girl, who thought that it was a woman's privilege to help in the fight. I could never have proposed to Eleanor Thomas."

"Still, you did it,"—her eyes brightened whimsically—"and you were accepted, if I remember rightly." Again her voice grew serious. "Don't you know that Eleanor Thomas has less chance of gaining her privilege than Alice Murray, unless you help her?"

Men are human. Stillworth took her once more in his arms, but he whispered accusingly:

"How about my scrap with fortune? Haven't you rather spoiled it, dear?"

The answering voice muffled against his shoulder came with something of the undignified quality of a little girl's giggle.

"If you think so, you have only to wait," she assured him, "until you interview John Thomas."

AS IT'S WRITTEN

JIMMY THORNE turned resolutely on his heel and walked back to his own desk. He and Miss Griggs, the stenographer, were quite alone in the yard office of the Fuller Lumber Company; the other members of the office staff had not yet returned from lunch. What Miss Griggs and Jimmy had been

BY
JOHN
BARTON
OXFORD

talking about had nothing whatever to do with lumber, the quantities thereof or the prices thereto. It had been a pleasant little conversation, just as the other little noontime conversations between the pair had all been pleasant—too pleasant; there was the trouble.

Jimmy suddenly realized whither these

conversations were tending. And while Miss Griggs was a mighty fine girl—quite the finest and jolliest Jimmy had ever known—there was a reason why these little conversations mustn't take on the very intimate note they had been displaying more and more of late.

It wasn't a matter of lack of funds. Oh, no! Jimmy had a very creditable showing at the Second National. Nor yet was it any indigent relatives Jimmy must support. Jimmy was quite free in the world, so far as indigent relatives were concerned. It was something deeper, far more potent than anything like that.

Jimmy opened a loose-leaf ledger and scowlingly began making entries. A heavy load of lumber rattled past the windows out in the yard. Jimmy, abstractedly glancing up, caught sight of Miss Griggs' left cheek. Even now it bore the faintest, most alluring flush as a result of that recent conversation. Jimmy bit his lip and scowled more ferociously at the ledger.

Miss Griggs was not a stunning beauty; but she was sensible and jolly and eminently womanly. What a wife she would make for a man! And then Jimmy, finding his thoughts returning in that direction, squared his shoulders and bent to his work, like a man who saw his duty and would do it at any cost.

Glancing at Jimmy Thorne, you would have decided that he was a live wire. You would have told yourself that Jimmy could play a ripping game of five-inch balk-line, that he had the percentages of every major league ball team at his tongue's end, and the batting average of every player in the list who could do better than 300 stowed away somewhere in his mind. You would have concluded that Jimmy's evenings when the day's work at the Fuller lumber yard office was over were in nowise gray or colorless. And right there is where you would have another very large guess coming.

For Jimmy's evenings were nothing at all like what you pictured them to yourself. As for balk-line, Jimmy wouldn't have known which end of the cue to use; and baseball existed for him only as a name.

Jimmy's real life was centered in a

pile of books—stacks and stacks of them, piled high in the closet of his room on Springfield Street, not a good stone's throw from the lumber yard office. They were all alike in tone, those books. They were Romance with a very large and very capital R. They recounted the events in the lives of maidens the like of which never were on this earth; and men so brave they were past all hope of any redeeming humanity.

Every night as soon as his hurried dinner had been swallowed, Jimmy really began to live. He lighted the gas in that dingy Springfield Street room, pulled the frayed and tattered Morris chair under the gas-jet; elevated his feet to the bed, and was off in an orgy of Romance, wherein heroes sighed and heroines wept, and the most wonderful, thrilling, impossible things took place, and plot and counterplot shot back and forth with lightning speed, until it looked as if it never could come out satisfactorily—but in the end things were all smoothed out and the hero invariably married the girl.

No, you never would have suspected it of plump, rosy-faced, bald, good-natured Jimmy Thorne. But there are a thousand and one things in the private lives of our neighbors and friends and relatives and even our enemies, which would shock us quite as much, did we but know them—which, very fortunately, we generally don't.

Jimmy, reading such literature night after night, year in and year out, naturally enough had lost somewhat his sense of proportion. The idea had sprung up in his mind that somewhere, somehow, sometime, things were going to happen to him. Sometime from a taxi, in a restaurant, on a train, almost any old place, a small white hand would beckon him, or a veiled head would nod to him, or a soft voice would call to him, and there she would be, the starry-eyed, troubled and impossibly beautiful maiden (never having been a best-seller I can't do her adequate justice, but you know the type) with the *Great Adventure* all ready for him. Faith firmly implanted in us is a strange and wonderful thing; witness our Calvinistic ancestors and the man who thinks he can

beat the stock-market on a margin basis.

And now you see why Jimmy felt he must exercise more restraint in his conversations with Miss Griggs. A man who has a great adventure coming to him cannot think of marriage. Imagine a man poking around on such a quest with a wife at home! Preposterous! Miss Griggs was the nicest girl Jimmy had ever met in his life. He realized that more and more with each passing day. But that stack of books in his closet, to say nothing of the others he was continually buying, had done their work. He who sips of Romance and falls for it must be prepared for sacrifices.

It was raining that night when Jimmy stepped out of the lumber yard office. Albany Street was gaunt and bare and cheerless in the steady downpour. Turning up his coat collar, Jimmy headed for Springfield Street and a gorgeous evening of Romance. He had purchased three new ones that day, all of which bade fair to be corkers, and somehow Romance always went better when the rain was slashing the window-panes.

He had proceeded but a short distance from the office when with a whirr and a creak a big black motor drew up to the curb close beside him. Albany Street after business hours is not an overpopulated thoroughfare. There was no one else visible in the gray pall of the falling rain.

"Pardon me, sir!" said a soft voice. It set Jimmy's pulses leaping. It was such a voice as might have come from any of the four-hundred-odd pages of any of the two-hundred-odd books in that closet of his. The motor, too, had the proper look. The chauffeur was in livery. Its paint shone; its metal-work glistened.

"Would you be good enough to direct us to the South Station? My chauffeur is unfamiliar with these streets."

Jimmy raised his umbrella and snatched off his hat. From behind the curtain of the car a face peeped out at him—a white face, a troubled face, a starry-eyed face, an impossibly beautiful face, an undeniably and distinctly best-seller face. Jimmy felt as if his feet had

suddenly parted company with the plebeian earth and he was drifting upward on rosy and aureate clouds—if those are the proper things for one in his mental condition to drift upward on.

"South Station?" he repeated prosaically enough. "Straight down Albany Street to Dover, up Dover to Harrison Avenue—" he began his directions.

"Listen carefully, Albert," said the vision to the chauffeur. "We must make it as soon as possible. There's not a minute to waste. Would—oh, would it be troubling you too much, sir, to ask you to go with us and direct us. Albert will set you down anywhere you say afterwards."

A trim, small, white, ungloved hand pulled aside the mohair curtain invitingly. If Jimmy Thorne had thrilled before, he fairly threw an ecstatic convulsion now. The white hand beckoning him at last! And not from a taxi, either; but from a luxurious motor.

Jimmy floated in. At least he had no realization of any volition on his part as he entered, and the young woman moved over on the seat to make room for him, saying in a relieved voice as she did so: "It is so good of you!"

"Straight ahead," said Jimmy to the chauffeur, and off they shot.

In the gray twilight of the early evening Jimmy had a good look at the face beside him. The veil was pushed up on the big hat. It was the most beautiful face he had ever seen. A faint odor of orris and violets reached his nostrils. He pinched himself three times to make sure this was not another of those phantasmagorias which were wont to people his dreams after an unusually blissful evening with his romances.

"Left here!" Jimmy leaned forward to instruct the chauffeur as they reached Dover Street. "Then first right. Then straight away again for a bit!"

His breath was coming fast. His eyes were glowing. Covertly now and again he was turning them towards the wonderful vision beside him. He did not know that between times the vision was scanning him with shrewd, appraising eyes.

As they shot into Harrison Avenue the girl leaned forward.

"Faster, Albert! Faster!" she cried.

Then she settled back on the cushions; her under lip quivered and Jimmy was startled by the unmistakable sound of a sob.

"My dear madam—" Jimmy began, but got no farther; for suddenly the face was hidden by a pair of small white hands and the girl's whole frame shook with a storm of choking sobs.

"Oh, I cannot, I cannot," she said brokenly.

"My dear madam," said Jimmy mildly again. He couldn't think of anything else to say to save him.

"Forgive me," she said chokingly, evidently controlling herself with much effort. "I—I—oh, I haven't any right—you have been so good. But you see I am terribly overwrought. I have just had a message that there is a body in the morgue at Providence. I am going there, and if it should be—oh, if it should be—I can't bear it!"

Jimmy straightened his shoulders. Romance fairly dripped from his tones as he said: "Can't I go for you?"

Two hands clutched at his arm; two eyes burned eagerly very close to his.

"Would you? Would you?" said a tense voice.

"If I could do any good. If I could identify—"

The grip of the hands tightened.

"If it is he," came in an agonized whisper, "there will be an eagle tattooed on the left arm—an eagle with the initials B. M. F. under it."

"Turn to the right, down Essex here," Jimmy called to the chauffeur. "Straight run to the station now. I'll go," he added, turning to the girl.

"You'll have just time to catch the seven o'clock train," said she, consulting a tiny watch. "You will get there at eight. An hour there will be ample time. You can catch the nine o'clock Shore Line Express back and get in here at ten. I will have the car meet you. Telephone me what you find there at—the morgue. Katherine Gray, The Bellevue."

They had reached the station. The chauffeur had jumped down and un-snapped the curtain. The girl thrust a bill into Jimmy's hand.

"The fares," she explained briefly. "No, don't argue," she said, pushing him away as he would have demurred. "Hurry. You've just two minutes to get that train."

Jimmy darted into the station. He had always known that Romance was not overdrawn!

An hour and a half later, Jimmy from a stuffy telephone booth was talking to Katherine Gray at the Bellevue in Boston.

"No, I'm happy to say that message of yours was 'way off. They tell me there hasn't been a body in the morgue here for over two months."

From the other end of the wire came an hysterical cry of relief.

"I shall meet you at the train at ten," came a shaken voice, "and thank you then as I can't properly do now."

Well, talk about your Romance!

At a few minutes after ten that night, Jimmy Thorne stepped from the Shore Line Express in the South Station. Up the platform he went, his eyes focused on a certain large hat with a big black plume, which showed among the knot of waiting people at the gate.

Then the girl spied him, and with a little glad cry, came tripping towards him, dodging in and out among the other passengers straggling towards the gate.

Before Jimmy could realize what was happening, a pair of arms was about his neck.

"You dear!" she cried.

Then the girl was drawn gently from him. Simultaneously iron fingers gripped his right wrist. A heavy voice hissed in his ear:

"We've got yer this time. Don't make any scene. Come along quiet!"

Jimmy, as might any self-respecting citizen, resented this procedure thoroughly. He resented it to the point of stepping back a pace and striving to yank his arm free from the clutch of those fingers. At once another big figure appeared and his other wrist was grasped.

"Now what the—!" sputtered Jimmy. There was a cry from the girl.

"Oh, Dan, Dan, what have I done?"

she wailed, and turning, fled, wringing her hands as she went.

One of the men who held the squirming Jimmy watched her with a sardonic light in his eyes.

"The women's the ones to watch," he muttered to the other man. "They'll lead yer right every time. Frisk him for a gun, John!"

The other man ran his hand quickly and skillfully over Jimmy's pockets.

"Aint got any," was his verdict.

"Now, young feller," said the first speaker, "comin' with us peaceably? I don't want to put the nippers onto yer unless I have to."

"Say, what do you mean by this?" raged Jimmy. "My name's Thorne. I'm book-keeper at the Fuller Lumber Company down on Albany Street."

"Yes, yes, of course," said the big man soothingly, "but you just take a little ride up to headquarters with us and tell it to Cap'."

Jimmy, his teeth shut tight, was led through the crowd which had gathered, escorted to a taxi, and off the three rattled. They stopped at headquarters in Pemberton Square, and Jimmy found himself standing before a tall, gray-headed man with twinkling eyes, who surveyed him thoughtfully, the while one of the men holding him explained: "Yer foller the woman and yer always get 'em. Here he is, Cap'. Told yer we'd have him to-night."

"Who is it you've got?" asked the gray-headed man, while his eyes twinkled yet more brightly.

"Why, Frank Blossom, that bank-buster from Philadelphia."

"Oh, I don't know," the gray-headed man chuckled. "He doesn't look just as I thought he would."

He turned sharply to Jimmy. "Who are you?" he shot out.

"My name's Thorne—James Thorne. I'm head book-keeper at the Fuller Lumber Company, on Albany Street."

"How'd you happen to know that young lady that met you at the train?"

Jimmy swallowed hard. Then he told the whole story.

The gray-haired man laughed long and loud.

"There's a clever woman," said he. "She put one over on you two that time," he went on, swinging to Jimmy's captors. "She saw you shadowing her. She knew, too, Blossom was coming in on that ten train. The rest I don't have to tell you. Young man, I believe fully you are James Thorne and that you have fallen for this thing just as you say. As a mere matter of formality, however, I am going to call up Henry Fuller, the head of your company, and have him drop down here and identify you. If he does, you'll be quite free to go. You two hang round here for a bit. I want a word with you later."

There was an open fireplace in that room on Springfield Street. Very early next morning it was crammed full of papers and a merry blaze was started. Then out of the closet came Jimmy Thorne with armful after armful of books, which he proceeded to throw upon the fire. He shook his fist at them as they blazed up merrily.

That morning when Miss Griggs came to work, she found a big box on her desk. In the box was the largest bunch of violets she had ever seen, and hidden away among the violets was Jimmy Thorne's card.

Moreover at nine o'clock, Jimmy was leaning over her desk. He was rather flushed and ill at ease, but withal his face radiated an irresistible good-humor.

"Say, Miss Griggs," he stammered bashfully, "I don't suppose it would be any use to ask you to go to dinner with me to-night and take in a show afterwards, would it?"

"Try and see," Miss Griggs flashed back with a most becoming flush.



Old Si was busted

Si Duncan Sells *the* Homestead

By JOHN HASLETTE

Author of "The Sanitary Sheriff," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY DOUGLAS DUER

DAN WAGHORN was sitting on his favorite fence when I strolled over to have a talk with him about old times in Six Bars. He was still a little suspicious of me, as a Down Easter, and writer of the fiction he professed to hate so heartily, and, as I thought, invented so delightfully.

"You promised me another story when I saw you last, Mr. Waghorn," said I, proffering a case of cheroots, and leaning against the fence; "some facts about Six Bars long ago."

"Did I now?" said Dan, looking at me. "Well, if I hadn't clean forgot!"

"Well, I'm glad to take this opportunity of reminding you," I said pleasantly. "You were to let me hear something about Si Duncan."

Dan wrinkled his brows in deep thought. "Si Duncan? Yep, there useter be an individual of that handle hereabouts—sort of a ranch, he had. He was a gay old chip, Si—commonly setting round a faro lay-out, and laying out the homestead in chips."

"I thought you told me he sold it?" I said, helpfully.

"So he did. So he did. I remember Si right well now."

It seemed to me that the best policy was to give Dan rope. You couldn't hustle him with a story. He had to tell it in his own way. When he saw that I was going to keep silence, he puffed at his stogie, scratched his head once or twice, and began:

Well, sir, this Si, as I was telling you,

was some fond of playing the tables. He started in with the J. H. D. ranch, with a good herd of beeves, a competent string of punchers, and a fair heap of dough. That was all right. But Si reckoned that he could hand the lucky punch to any old gambler who'd stack chips against him. Now, when a feller gets up to hit out faro, stud poker, and euchre with both feet, and bring away the gold on his boots, he's like a boy trying to fight a sand punch-ball with his bare mitts.

Faro had one kick at Si and kicked him good and plenty; then stud poker landed him hearty in the left pocket, and euchre fairly cut him through the ropes. But Si wasn't swallowing the sponge, and even that couldn't get his goat. Nossir, he up again and mixed it promiscuous with all three, and didn't quit until he put his hand through the toe of the stocking.

When a man has a kink of this kind he naturally is blind to the world. The money was gone, but there were the beeves, and old Si went in to gamble on the herd. Well, the three were on top of him soon again. Faro ate three hundred head and asked for more; stud poker cleaned up six hundred, and euchre began to develop an appetite, sure.

Si was a whale on economies, and he allowed that he was saving money like greased lightning when he gave most of his punchers their wads, and invited them to foller their star, which was at that time shining some distance away from the J. H. D. ranch. First he saved on their pay, then on their grub, and as for the beeves, logic tells Si that those animals were just eating the best grass off'n the ranch, and generally making it barren f'r the next lot. That's the kind of man Si was. He'd have argued that the sun ought to go on half time to keep too much of the heat from working off.

Now, Si, being a feller who was equal to handing up pocket money to any rancher who'd bank against him, became fairly popular in this section. By'n by, he found dollar-finding a bit hard; and about that time he had a round up of his stock. There were only one fifty beasts in sight, counting the Methuse-lahs, the sore-foots, and the deadbeats

that no self-respecting coyote would be seen gnawing.

So Si went round the ranchers he was so thick with, and borrowed some. He touched all of them for a few, and gave a fellow forty of the least dead beeves for a small wad. Then he waltzed in again to the business of playing the tables. Well, the tables played him again. Faro and stud poker and euchre were livelier than ever; they'd got more power into their right swings, and their side-stepping was a living marvel, it was sure. He tried in-fighting; he tried to run so fast he'd get in on the back of them; but the three old bruisers had him every time, and in two weeks old Si was winnowing his pockets with both hands without hearing the glad tinkle of two coins. He was busted, *gastado*. It was a fair clean-up.

"So he sold the homestead?" I put in, somewhat impatiently.

Dan looked at me more in sorrow than in anger. "If you allows that you know the story, I guess I'll have a smoke."

"Sorry, Mr. Waghorn," I said humbly. "My mistake."

Well, (he finally went on) it didn't take a Solomon to get wise to the fact that Si Duncan wasn't going to return dividends thataway, and the fellers who'd staked him were wondering when the baker's cart was due with the dough. So they called a kind of meeting, and passed a verdict that Si was to appear before them right away, and give reasons for his unnatural conduct—see! He was also to produce a statement of his affairs, so that every man could see how much there was left to grab. They writes this down, and sends a puncher over to the J. H. D. asking for news, and he comes back with the old man.

Well, for about ten minutes there was some considerable noise. Si sat down, and looked at them shooting off their mouths about his extravagance, and the different kinds of fool he was shorely making himself to be. But when it came to suggesting that the ranch should be divided in sections and donated to his creditors, old Si got up and looked mighty indignant.

"Look here, you fellers," says he, "I owes you money and that's the plain fact."

They owned that was correct.

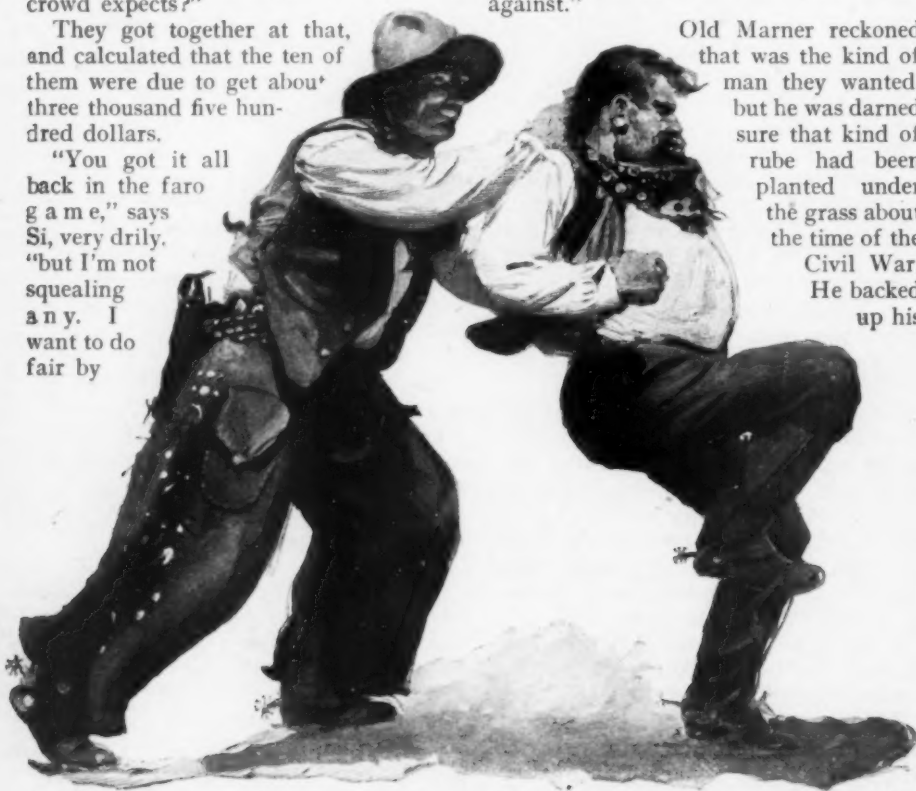
"You hopes to get that dough again," Si goes on quietly. "I sees that. Now, how much do you figger it that your crowd expects?"

They got together at that, and calculated that the ten of them were due to get about three thousand five hundred dollars.

"You got it all back in the faro game," says Si, very drily, "but I'm not squealing a n y. I want to do fair by

feller from the great and glorious cities of the East. We looks to find a city man we can fill up to the teeth with high and pure ideas about the land. We want a man we can stuff to the neck, a man who'll sling a heavy wad for the ranch without knowing what he's got his feet against."

Old Marner reckoned that was the kind of man they wanted, but he was darned sure that kind of rube had been planted under the grass about the time of the Civil War. He backed up his



"Boys," he says to the cowpunchers, "see these rough persons off the ranch without undue delay."

you-all, and I don't see that any feller's going to pay good dollars for my little ranch without a head of stock on it, and as for cutting up the land in sections, I don't see how the feller who gets the middle lot is going to reach his particular stamping ground."

They saw that quick. Old Marner, of the Gum Tree ranch, owned most of the land bounding Si's place, and he was the only one pleased at the idee. When he got hold, he calculated not to let the others reach their sections over his ground—see?

Well, Si spoke up again, and says he, "What we wants is a rube. We want a

opinions with a true story of Colonel Biggs, at Planktown, who thought he'd got a city lamb, till the animal showed its big teeth, and fairly et the colonel up. He said that at last the East was being eddicated for a sure thing, and he didn't see anything but rubber-necks coming West.

Now, this was good horse sense, and Si had to allow that the rube he wanted wasn't easy finding. There was a general argument then, and the language was getting kind of offensive, when Si throws out one hand, and elocutes a seven-foot word the Dagoes are fonding of using.

"Eureka!" he shouts.

"Not f'r mine!" says Marner, and one of the others asks Si if he intended that serious.

"I have it," says Si. "Old Dukker was telling me they had a city dude over to Kudo City, who was looking for a bit of land to take up. He wanted a going consarn with a herd of stock on it."

Marner looked at him pretty thoughtful, and said that as the J. H. D. hadn't more'n ten head of cripples, he didn't see how Si was going to rope the feller in."

"I do," says Si, very perky. "I wants to pay you back your dollars, and I can't unless you-all give me a friendly hand. Most of you have got a good deal of unbranded stuff on your runs now, and I want you each and all, gentlemen, to have a few hundred head of those driven onto my ranch by night. Then I'll get this dude up to see over the place, and he'll likely take it as a good going consarn. I'll pint out to him the cattle on a thousand hills, and get the dough in the twinkle of a lamb's tail—see?"

They didn't see, at first. Old Marner was anxious to know how they was going to know their own stock again, and how they was going to get them back.

"That's easy!" said Si, with a scornful lip. "You-all can put on a small brand anywhere it wont be seen easy by a feller from the East. Then I'll collect the money, pay you your wads, and skip lively for Chicago with the rest. When I'm hitting the horizon you can come along, and allow that Old Si rustled a few hundred of your cattle. If the young man doesn't get cold feet, he'll ask you for proof. 'Well,' says you, 'my brand is on the beasts.' He can't go against that, you bet, an' he can't prove that you sold the beasts to me, which you didn't, and couldn't, with me busted. Now you understands my idee. It's the only way you handle the dough I owes you, so think it over."

They thought hard, but Si's plan was the only one held water.

Marner settled it. He agreed, and the rest agreed, and the beasts was to be branded and sent over as soon as possible.

Now, you see that the next thing was

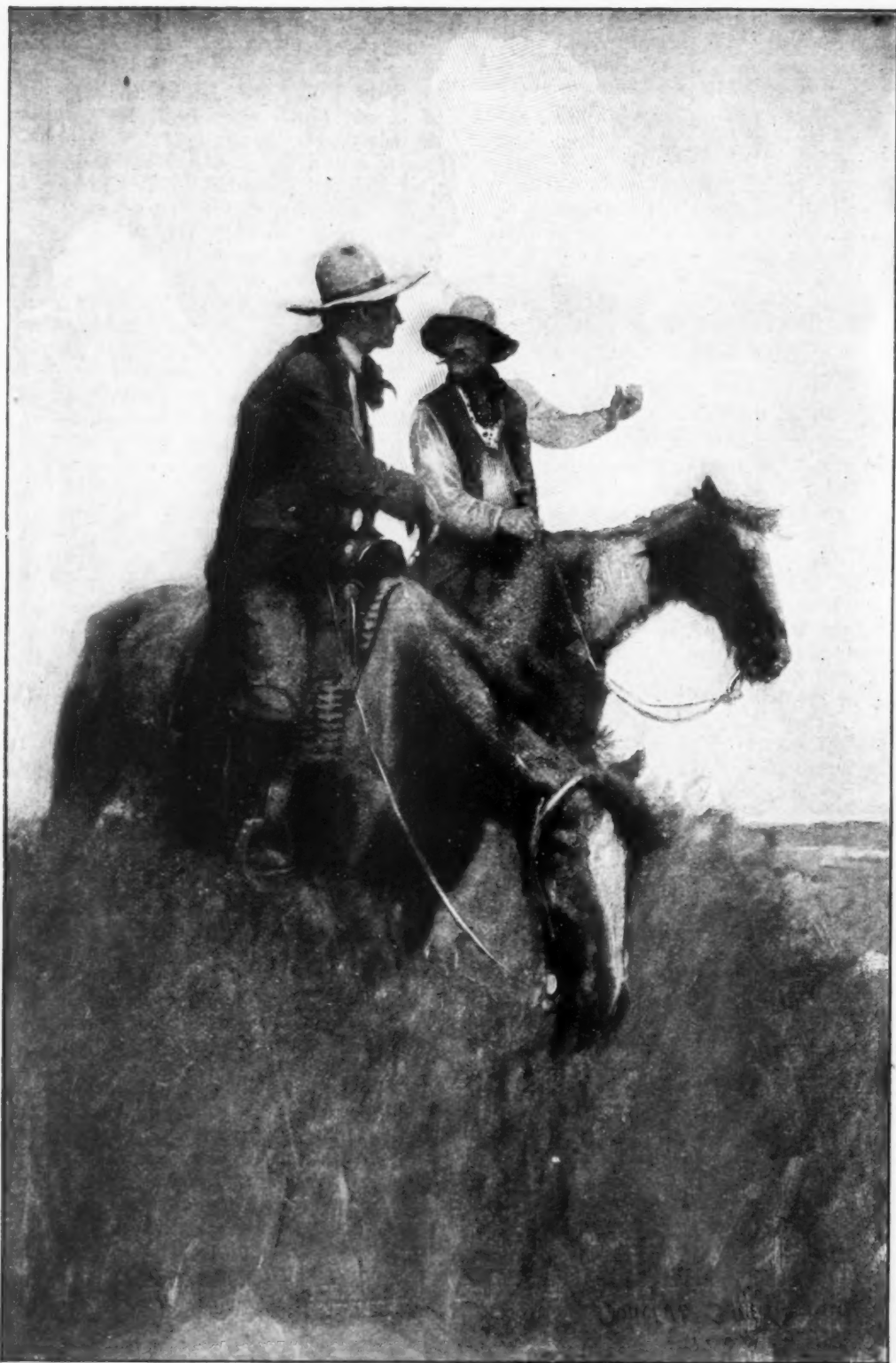
to get this Kudo City lamb into the fold. Si set about that right away. He sent the only puncher he had into Kudo, told him to take a few drinks at the Hotel where the feller was staying, and to let it out, quiet-like, that Si Duncan was thinking of selling the J. H. D. ranch, lock, stock, and barrel. He wasn't to direct his mouth at the city dude, but just to talk generally so's he'd overhear. Well, the puncher made good. He made it seem as if some one was putting up the garden of Eden with no reserve, and sure enough the feller he was laying for jumped at the proposition four-square. He asked the puncher where this milk and honey run was to be seen, and the puncher up and told him that probably old Si had it sold by that time, there was such an all-fired rush for it.

However, this feller—he was about six foot high, and didn't look as if you could have blown him away easy—this feller opined that he would like some to visit the J. H. D. an' make old Si a sporting offer. That was velvet for the puncher. He got a spare horse for the city man, and they went off to Six Bars.

By the time they got to the ranch, all the unbranded stuff in the section had been put on the J. H. D., and Si Duncan was rubbing his hands frequent. I tell you it looked good. If it had been all square, the place would have been worth a lump. Well, the city man met Duncan, and after pumphandling friendly, they got down to biz.

They looked over the house, and they rid over the ranch, and the young feller made a kind of rough calculation of the number of animals he saw. He came back to the house, feeling pretty good about it. Right there, he made Si an offer to take the place for ten thousand dollars and they was to ride in here—to Six Bars—the next morning to fix it up with the attorney, and pay over. That was O. K.; and Si sent word to his creditors that they'd have their money put on the post and sent them unostentatious by midday. Yessir, the oid boodler paid his debts right enough.

"So he swindled the city man?" I said.



Si and the city man rid over the ranch, and right there the young feller made Si an offer to take the place for \$10,000.

"I don't know about swindling," said Dan, slowly. "I was coming to that part."

"Sorry," said I, and Dan forgave me freely.

The next day, Si and the city man adjourned to the attorney's and the old man got his money. He divided off three thousand five hundred dollars into ten parts, and mailed them prompt to the subscribers. Now, that's where the fun commences.

Si quit the homestead, gathered up his tents like the Arabians and silently stole away. The ranchers whooped it up when they saw their dough back in the trough. They were gay and glad right enough. When two days had gone, Marner called the others together, and spoke serious. He told them that Si was gone, and that the city man had got a fresh set of punchers to look after his cattle. This was the time for them to stroll over and say that their own unbranded beefs had been rustled, or strayed. So they made a party of it and went over. The city man interviewed them on the veranda of his home.

"Sir," says Marner, bowing most polite, "we have reason to believe that our cattle still unbranded have strayed onto your ranch, and we'd like to sort them out and drive 'em back where they come from."

"Which are yours?" asked the city man, politer still.

"Mine are marked with a small G. M. T. on the left flank," says Marner, "—so small you might overlook it."

The rest told their brands, too, all so small you could hardly see them, and all in places one wouldn't look. The city man took notes of all the brands; then he looks at them quiet and thoughtful, and says: "I bought all these cattle from the former owner of the ranch, one Duncan by name. If you will go out and ride around, you will see that they are all marked legibly with J. H. D., this Duncan's brand. How do you account for that?"

Well, sir, those ranchers' profanity got the better of their manners, and they let it hum without waiting. But the city man he looked at them coldly, and

presently yelled for a puncher, whom he ordered to rope and throw a beast, to look for the small brand.

"You gentlemen will find that you are mistaken," he says, and lights up a cigar.

Now, presently, the puncher comes back, and says that there is a small brand, but it's been crossed out, and Si Duncan's brand is prominent and large as life. The ranchers sees now that old Si had taken care to burn all that stock before he showed it to the city man, and they were wild.

"Look here!" says Marner, viciously, "those animals are ours, and we're going to have them back where they belong."

"I have twelve of the toughest cowmen in the section within call," says the young feller, "and you're going to get booted off'n this ranch, if you talks like that. Let's look at it sober."

"Well?" says Marner, fit to eat him fresh.

"You say those cattle are yours, and I say there is Mr. Duncan's brand on them. How do you work it out? Either you sold them to him, or else he—"

"Rustled them!" said old Marner, thinking they were clear of Si and might put it on him. "That's what he must have done. We liked to think him an honest kind of man, and that the cattle had strayed over here, but now we know he must have rustled our stock, and sold it to you."

The city man looked pretty despondent. "Well, gentlemen, if you can prove that Mr. Duncan stole your stock, I must in honesty restore it," says he.

"That's the talk!" says old Marner. "You're a noble and generous youth for sure."

The young feller looks at him. "Ef you can *prove* it, I said."

Marner was cussing again. "How the —what the—when the—how in thunder do you reckon we can prove anything when the rustler has sloped off?" he shouts.

"Off where?" asks the city dude.

"Chicago," says Marner.

"How do you know?" asks the other.

Marner said he didn't know, but he guessed it, and the young feller stared at him: "Look here," he says, "I have just

heard that Duncan has come back, and is staying with a store-keeper seven miles off. I'll send some one for him, and he can answer your questions."

Well, Marner looked at his crowd, and they looked at him. In the end of it, they agreed to question old Si. Then the new ranchman sent off a feller to bring Si in, alive or dead, and assembled all his spare punchers.

"These gentlemen say that all the cattle here belong to them," he says, waving his hand. "They say that Si Duncan rustled them and put on his own brand. Well, he's coming here, willing or unwilling, and we're going to get at the truth of this."

All his boys agreed that this was pretty honest and fair, and they sat down to wait.

Duncan came right enough, and the rancher crowd was fit to eat him. But the city man took charge of the trial.

"These gentlemen say, Duncan, that you rustled their cattle," says he, very distinctly. "Is that true?"

"No," says Si. "Who says so?"

You may guess that Marner was doing a bit of lively thinking. If he said what he'd said before, Si was bound to

let the cat out of the bag, and admit that he'd helped to swindle the new rancher. That might mean jail for him and his crowd, and he didn't like it a little bit.

"Do you accuse me of stealing your cattle—any of you?" asked Si, looking at them meaningly.

"No," says Marner, sullenly, knowing he just had to quit.

"No," says the crowd, wishing they had Si at the end of a gun in some nice lonely place.

Then the city man got up, and he looked black. "Get out of this, you swindling sharks!" says he, and to the punchers, who was grinning freely, "Boys, see these rough persons off'n the ranch without undue delay."

"Did they go, Mr. Waghorn?" I asked as Dan stopped.

"They did," said he. "I guess this is an unmoral kind of tale, for the rancher kept the cattle, Si cleared out with the cash, and justice wasn't done." He chuckled gently as he added, "I believe, if he'd tried, the city man could have had up those ranchers for trying to chouse him out of his stock!"



The Lover of Life

by

EDWIN
BALMER

Co-Author of "The Surakarta," Author of "The Sleeping Ship," etc.

S NOW!" Elizabeth

heard the news shouted from the next room. "Mother, there's snow again!" And Elizabeth, fully awakened, sat up in bed, smiling and looking out.

Snow indeed,—light, flaky snow,—the second snow of the winter to cover the ground, had fallen during the night. It had ceased before dawn and the sky had cleared; so the bright December sun, as it lifted above the summit of East Mountain, dazzled down the crisp slopes. It had reached Elizabeth's little house in the val-

I L L U S T R A T E D
B Y W J . S C O T T



A man on horseback was coming up the valley toward the house.

ley, shot in through Dicky's open window, and waked her little boy.

"Snow, Mother!" he repeated the news, running into her room. Elizabeth sprang up to close her open window, but feeling upon her throat the fresh, crisp air, she left the sash up while she stood looking out.

No one was in sight anywhere on the slope of East Mountain. The nearer rise was all clear, not even a fence showing; only naked bushes and berry-briars, and here and there a mullen stalk or tussock of grass, stood above the snow; higher up,

where the trees began, the bare beeches and maples stood apart to disclose anyone moving there. Only a rabbit leaped away, its blue shadow more distinct than its white winter coat in the sunlight under the trees. But unmistakable marks in the white surface upon the hill fifty yards from the house told that, early as it was, some one had passed.

Elizabeth drew down the sash, and followed Dicky into his playroom, where old Oliver already had the logs blazing in the fireplace.

As her little boy stood at her knee while she secured obstinate buttons in bagging buttonholes, she spoke to him, as always in the morning, of his father.

The picture of the father looked down at them from the wall. It was wonderfully like the father, Elizabeth always said. It was no mere photograph, but a photograph of a marvelous portrait of his father painted by the greatest portrait painter in the country—a face which seemed to change from one serious-smiling, kindly look to another deeper, and then to quite a different look of love and joy in all life, as one gazed into the gentle, direct eyes.

The great painter, Dicky knew, had come there to that house to paint his father's picture, just after Dicky was born. A very great many people—some very poor people like Oliver, and some very rich—had each given a little to pay for painting the portrait. For everyone had loved his father on account of the books his father had written about the animals and the little birds that lived through the mountains.

Dicky's mother read the books often to him—the beautiful books with the wonderful photographs of the little animals and birds which had been taken by his father. The pictures showed how close his father could go to them all—how none of them, not even the foxes, seemed afraid. The stories with the pictures told how greatly his father had loved the little birds and animals and wished them always to live happily in the woods.

So the people who paid for painting the portrait gave money also to buy the woods all about the house for the little animals to live in. These people had the portrait taken to the big city after it was

painted; but after his father died next year, they made a wonderful photographic copy of it and sent it to his mother to keep.

Elizabeth had explained how some of these people who loved his father still came to the house. This morning, in case Dicky might see signs of a stranger which she had seen now for the third or fourth time, she told her boy how a few of his father's friends often came to the valley and were content just to revisit the forest, without coming to the house. But this explanation did not satisfy herself. Immediately after breakfast, she set out to follow the foot-prints in the snow to see where they led.

The dazzling white cover over the ground made all the slope of East Mountain seem as it was when her husband first brought her there. As she entered the woods, here and there hemlocks showed scars where, at one time, they had been torn by tanners, and maples bore marks of tapping; but that was all. The wolf's howl and the scream of the puma long had been silenced; but from somewhere further up the slope, a fox barked. The tracks of hare and porcupine in the snow were the common marks; the extraordinary ones were the prints of the city boots, city-narrow and city-heeled, sharp cut in the snow.

As she followed the trail, Elizabeth noticed that, though he had a good start, he had stopped so often that she was gaining upon the man. Here, having discovered the tiny tunnel being made by the little deer mice under the new snow, he had dropped on hands and knees to trace carefully the just perceptible ridge which indicated the tunnel's course from one tree to another. At the end of the passage, he had stood aside and waited, evidently to see the little creatures enter their tunnel or leave it.

Immediately this confirmed to Elizabeth that the stranger could not be one of her husband's intimates. He did not know that the stitchings of the fine, hurried strides of the deer mouse are sewn upon the surface of the snow seldom except at night.

Yet how careful he had been to do no slightest damage to the little mice.

Here he had followed the lace-points

of a partridge track, here the soft pads of a hare, here the digitigrade of a squirrel—stepping over when he crossed them to leave the little trails intact.

So she came upon him suddenly. He had stopped again and was standing with his back to her—a tall, well-formed man, but rather spare for his height, as Elizabeth had guessed from his tracks. His suit, city-made, but rough and thick, let him dispense with an overcoat; his hands at that moment were bare and clasped behind him. They were long, strong hands, but delicate—delicate and extraordinarily sensitive.

He turned. Elizabeth did not know him. He had so unusual a face that she could be certain she had never seen him before, or she could not completely have forgotten him. Yet she was conscious that, as he turned, he not only knew her but was startled as though he had expected she must recognize him. She was aware, indeed; that he seemed in suspense till it was clear that she did not know him. Color came to his face and he pulled off his cap.

His hair was shot here and there with gray, but he was young—not five years older than Elizabeth herself and not older than her husband when he died. He could have been little more than thirty-five. His deep blue eyes were direct and clear, the brows dark, his nose straight, the mouth mobile, sensitive. But as soon as he saw she did not know him, it expressed uneasiness no longer.

"I was wondering what to do just now," he said quietly. "What did your husband do in cases like this, Mrs. Brailie? What do you do?"

Elizabeth, following the direction of his nod, recognized that he meant the little struggle going on in the trunk of the dead tree before him. Inside the tree, deer mice had laid by their store of beechnuts, each kernel carefully shelled. A red squirrel had discovered the store-chamber. Halfway up the trunk he found a hole leading to it and was busy gnawing the entrance large enough to admit him. But at the bottom of the tree, the mice had another hole and through this, after their first panic, they were scurrying to remove their supply, kernel by kernel, and to take it down

through a new tunnel under the snow before the squirrel could seize their store.

"What were you going to do?" Elizabeth asked.

The stranger smiled. "I started to drive the squirrel away, of course. I'm from the city. But I remembered seeing something in one of your husband's books—or was it John Burroughs'—about almost exactly this sort of thing. He—your husband or Burroughs, if it were he—just left them alone to have it out, didn't he?"

Elizabeth hesitated to answer. She was used to being recognized and spoken to by strange visitors at other seasons. But this man, she knew, was no ordinary visitor and he asked more than the mere question he worded. And now he answered that himself.

"He did. I remember I couldn't understand why he never let himself interfere in the little affairs about here. Yet I know that it was because he didn't interfere that everyone wanted to come here—that I myself wanted to come."

Elizabeth wished him to continue. "Because he didn't interfere?"

"Yes; because he could always sit by and watch and not interfere and see how the little animals got along in their own way, living just by themselves and—for themselves."

"And for themselves?" Elizabeth repeated quickly, on account of the way he had said it.

"Yes," the man said simply. "So he made it a goal for me to come here, when I could. May I, when I can?"

"Of course!" Elizabeth replied.

"Thank you!" he said. "Thank you!" He repeated it with such strange earnestness that Elizabeth found herself staring at him. He bowed to her, quietly, and moved off.

Elizabeth returned to her house, wondering—wondering not only at the man but at herself. She had never seen him before; they had exchanged only a few words. Yet for the first time since, as a girl, she had met her husband, she was comparing another man's face with his.

II

The publishers of her husband's books

were preparing a new edition which required additional photographs to illustrate it. So Elizabeth spent most sunshiny mornings in the hills with her camera. She found at different times traces of the visits of the tall city man; but it was more than a week later that she again encountered him. That morning he too had a camera; and she found him lying at length in the snow, like a boy, waiting for a grey squirrel to come down from a tree to be photographed.

He jumped up, flushed and shaking himself, as he heard Elizabeth behind him. He answered her smile by feeling into a pocket, drawing out an envelope and offering it to her awkwardly.

"I got that last Friday," he explained. "I was going to mail it to you. I must have been awfully lucky to get it."

Elizabeth opened the envelope. It contained a clear, excellent photograph of a fox in the woods at night—all alive, alert, just as the click of the mechanism which discharged the flash-light surprised him. Elizabeth exclaimed her pleasure.

"A fox! I didn't even hope to get one! Thank you so much! But,"—she tried not to let her tone change—"why were

you going to mail it? Why weren't you going to leave it at the house?"

He put his hand again in his pocket for his only answer and drew out other photograph prints.



He jumped up, flushed and shaking himself.

"I got these Saturday morning and some of them before," he said as he offered them. "I'd be glad if you could use any of them."

Elizabeth examined them enviously. They were among the best photographs she had ever seen of the little wood animals taken close to the camera.

"What mechanism did you use?" she asked.

"Mechanism?"

"They are so close," she explained; but then she saw that he had not failed to understand—she recognized the same rush of sensitiveness she had noticed the first time they spoke together.

"I didn't have to use mechanism—except for the fox," he replied at last. "They—they aren't any more afraid of me than of anyone else."

The words in themselves were nothing; what she had asked him was but natural to anyone. Yet Elizabeth knew that somehow she had hurt this strange man, and that she could see no reason for it, did not lessen her guilt. Wonder of it almost forced from Elizabeth the question direct; but she modified it.

"You were a friend of my husband's?"

"I met him once," he almost rebuffed her.

Elizabeth could ask him no more. She felt as if he not only meant to dismiss discussion of himself, but, with the same sentence, meant to dismiss her. She put his prints away safely and again thanked him for them.

"I want them for a new edition of my husband's books, you know," she said.

"Yes," he said, "I know."

"If you want to help me with more pictures, I can show you what I have and what I need—if you will stop at the house."

"Thank you," he said in such a way that Elizabeth knew that he did not mean to come. And he did not. Hardly a week through the winter but one day found him in the valley. And though he still avoided the house, he frankly offered himself as companion for Elizabeth and for Dicky upon their many, busy expeditions.

Elizabeth laughed sometimes to herself in the evenings at how very well she and Dicky and the man from the city were getting to know and to like each other—and how completely he had avoided every personal allusion. He had not even told her his name. Old Oliver, who made investigations at Rushton—the little town upon the railway—discovered only that he came up from the city and kept his horse at Rushton.

He himself had volunteered that much to Elizabeth, with the additional information that he bunked for his week-ends and stabled his horse in the cabins the barkmen had left upon Craggy Mountain.

Yet Elizabeth realized that they had become almost friends, and scarcely less instinctively than Dicky, she trusted him.

III

Successively the close prints upon the snow of a tiny foot scarcely larger than the grey squirrel's, had told that the skunks had awakened from their mid-winter nap; another new and sharper and larger foot-print had showed that the raccoons had roused from their longer hibernation, and starving thin, had left their dens in the ledges.

Then the snow had gone; the rabbits cast off their winter colors. Bees boomed from their hives; all the slopes became green, and life called everywhere.

Even upon the dead trees the staccato raps of the woodpeckers preparing new holes mixed with the squabbles of the nuthatches and chickadees for the possession of the old ones. Pewees flew past, bearing bits of moss and lichens for their tiny nests among the living branches, and pairs of orioles tore at the asclepias for flax to hackle and weave into their high-swinging nests looped to the tops of the tallest trees.

And all the little beasts guarded broods of young.

It was upon a warm, clear evening, all deep green upon the mountains and all glorious red and gold upon the clouds above them from the setting sun, that Elizabeth saw a man on horseback coming up the valley toward the house, and she saw it was her friend of outdoors.

To see if he would come into the house, if he wished now to see her, she retreated into the library and waited till old Oliver brought him in.

She could not see his face well, for the last sunlight glow was behind him as he entered; but his first movement was a surprise.

Scarcely having spoken to her, he glanced at her reading table and crossed

to it; and there possessing himself of a magazine, still in its mailing wrapper, he breathed his relief almost audibly and turned about.

"You will excuse me," he apologized. "I did not hear till this morning what was in this. I thought that you would get it."

Elizabeth did not attempt to conceal her astonishment. "My husband used to write for that magazine; so the publishers still send it to me."

He held the magazine behind his back.

"Mrs. Braille," he demanded abruptly, "you want me to be able to come here?"

Elizabeth, not able to see his face in the failing light, evaded.

"What do you mean?"

"I want to be able to come here—and come when I can. I need—you must not misunderstand me—but I need now more than I thought would be enough when I first came here. You see, I thought before I came here, that it would be enough—enough just to get out for a day or two away from everything else here in your hills with the little animals—and be just like a friend to them, as your husband was. But I have come to need more, you see; and you—you let me come to need it. I didn't come in here at first; I didn't try to meet you—though I knew you wanted to know everyone who came about here—because I didn't dare hope you and I could possibly become friends. But we have, haven't we?"

Elizabeth did not answer. She fumbled with the chimney of the lamp upon the table beside her.

"We have," he answered himself. "And I'm asking for nothing more than I've had—to come here, as I have been coming, and see you and talk with you and go about with you. And I can,"—he held the magazine in front of him—"if you can only throw this away without opening it or let me tear out a page before giving it to you."

She lighted the lamp and, turning the wick so the light glowed softly, looked up into the man's face.

"But if I cannot?" she replied at last.

"I cannot see you—I cannot come here again."

She took the magazine.

"You mean I would not let you if I read what is in this about you?"

"Yes," he said.

"Then what is here about you is true?"

"Yes."

"Then why do you not want me to know it?"

"Because I cannot tell you the other side of that truth."

"Cannot?"

"I mean I could not come here for myself—it would not help me to come if you knew."

She pressed both her hands over the magazine in her doubt. Her slender, firm little fingers showed pale and transparent in the lamp's yellow glow. His eyes, watching her hands, suddenly ceased to await merely their action; he gazed at her hands and suddenly, with a shudder, hid his own behind him.

"What is it?" she cried.

"Your hands have never hurt a living thing!"

"What have you done?" she demanded.

As quickly as he had lost control of himself, he regained it.

"It is there," he said quietly. "You will know the account from my picture which they put with it. You can read it." And he turned and left her.

Elizabeth heard him outside; he spoke to his horse, mounted and rode away. For a moment more she stood listening where he had left her, as if she expected the scurry of the horse's hoofs to turn back; but they died away; the darkness had fallen so swiftly in the little valley that Elizabeth, as she went to the window, could barely make out the man and horse as a moving blur far off.

She came back to the lamp and slowly tore the wrapper from the magazine; but before she opened it she heard Dicky behind her.

The boy came in flushed and excited.

"Mother, is he gone? I was way off with Oliver; didn't he come to see me? Mother, when's he coming back?"

"I don't know," Elizabeth answered; and suddenly she realized her words herself.

She dropped the magazine in the bottom of a drawer and locked it.

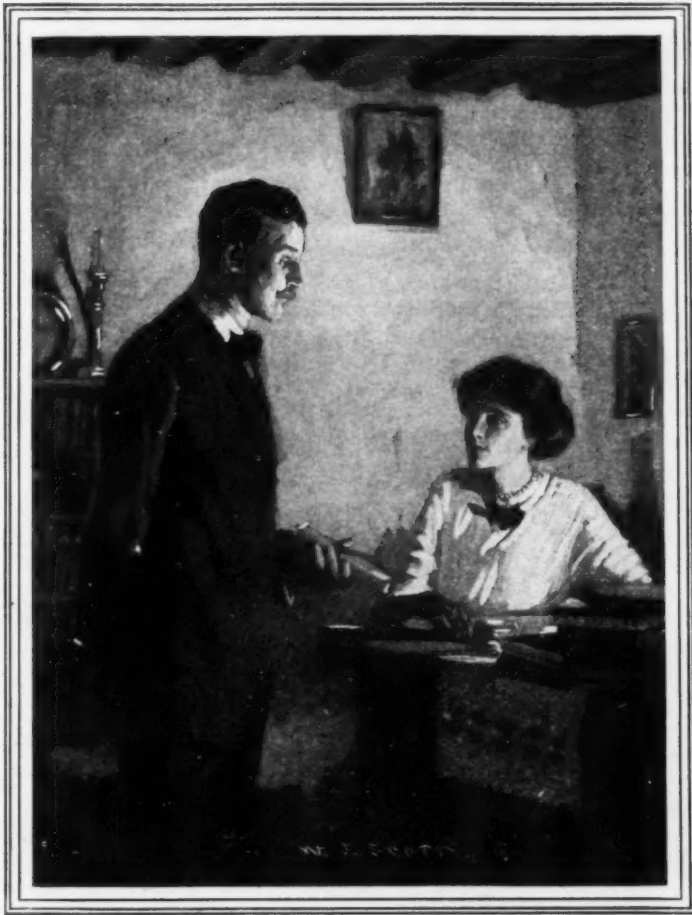
Who was this man? What had he done

which—if she knew it—must keep him from ever seeing her again? Was it not her right—her duty to know that? Ought she not to want to find out now that she knew—as she had last seen him—she could not keep herself from comparing his face with her husband's, as she had the first time she met him?

To end the absurdity of the comparison, she went up to the room where her husband's picture hung, and lighted the lamp and studied it. But instead of ending the feeling, it brought to her a sense of dissatisfaction with the picture that she had not had before. There was a lack which, of course, was in the portrait—there could have been no such lack in her husband. She was letting the portrait replace her own memory of her husband for, half an hour before, this strange man had seemed to possess something noble which her husband had not.

A score of times, in the days that followed, she took the key and unlocked the drawer into which she had dropped the magazine—but she went no further.

Then the summer heat descended; and with its parch and dryness, a plague of which she had heard but vaguely in years before—a plague which they called the children's plague—came spreading up from the city. Here it struck and then there, with terrible quickness and without understood cause or connection.



"I cannot see you—I cannot come here again."

Elizabeth shuddered when she learned of how it left the children; but she believed that Dicky, at least, must be safe—until, suddenly, one morning, she bent over his bed and knew that the sickness had come upon her child.

She sent Oliver galloping to Rushton with a telegram for the doctor from the nearest town, though she knew the doctor could do almost nothing. Yet when the physician came and admitted his helplessness, she clutched him wildly. "Nothing?" she cried. "Can no one in all the world do anything?"

The old doctor, who had known her husband, told her of the only possible chance as mercifully as he could.

"My dear, I shall not say that there is no one who can do anything. I have

heard only this week that"—he hesitated—"that physician Thorpe has—" He got no further.

"Thorpe!" she cried. "He? The monster! Thorpe, the vivisectionist, whom my husband denounced?"

The doctor waited to quiet her.

"Elizabeth, my dear," he said then, "I am not sure that even he can save Dicky. I can tell you only that they say in the

My baby shall get well. Yes! And he will walk and run again, too! He will!" Upon the tree just outside her window, a little furry brown form moved and scampered away. Elizabeth pointed to it. "God would never leave that little beast to run and climb and not permit it to my baby!"

"No," the old doctor agreed, "he couldn't—without leaving us power to



"Have you ever thought that what made Thorpe do what he has done might be courage—not cruelty?" the old doctor asked.

city he has at last proved his serum for which—"

"He has been slaughtering little dumb creatures!"

"But now he is saving children—hundreds of children—sick like Dicky here. He is saving them all—or almost all—to whom he can get in time."

"It can't be so!" Elizabeth cried. "My husband said God never meant for good to come from such things as Thorpe has done! God—our God who gives us all life—could not let good come from such suffering of his little dumb creatures.

transfer some of that life to save our babies, if we could find a man skillful and brave enough."

"Brave enough?" Elizabeth echoed.

"Have you never thought that what made Thorpe do what he has been doing might be courage—not cruelty?"

"Courage?" Elizabeth faltered.

So for a moment the doctor let her think alone. She returned to the window and as she looked out, her eyes met the lower branch of the tree upon which Dicky used to climb and from which his swing now hung, motionless. Her little

boy had been so active and quick and strong, climbing upon that low limb and tossing high and free in the swing. But suddenly now she saw him a cripple in a chair under that tree. She sprang up, and ran down for Oliver and sent him riding again to Rushton to telegraph. Then, on her knees beside the bed, she waited.

V

Late in the afternoon, a horseman appeared far down the valley. On chance that it might be Thorpe, she ran to meet him. Then she saw that it was only her new friend.

"Stop!" she cried to him. "You must go back! You must go back to Rushton and telegraph Thorpe for me—do you hear? I have sent for him; but he may not come for me! So you must telegraph to him—to your friends; to anyone!"

"Thorpe!" the man cried back. But he had not turned and now was beside her.

"No!" She attempted to prevent him from hurrying on foot to the house. "I say I have sent for him; but for what we have said—what my husband did—he may not come! If you have any influence at all, you must use it! For Dicky is sick—sick with—" She could not speak it. "He—Thorpe is the only one that can help him! And he must come in time!"

She fought physically with the man, but he kept on to the house. He spoke to her, but she could not hear him.

"I say you must get him—Thorpe! The one whom my husband denounced!" She tried to make him understand. "I am myself. I know what I say. Get him!"

So now, as they were at the door, he had to seize her and by his greater strength quiet her in his arms.

"I am he—Thorpe! Can't you see now?" he cried to her. "Let me go in!"

VI

In an hour the child was safe and they knew that he would run again and be active and strong.

Elizabeth followed Thorpe to the room where they parted the month before.

"So this is what **you** were doing! This was that which **you** could not tell me—for **you** could not make me understand, except it came to me like this!"

"No," Thorpe replied gently. "No, this is what **I** wanted to keep from you for my **own** sake, so—so you would not have to think of it with me and remind me of it."

"Remind you of it?"

"I've finished this, thank God! For what I've had to do to get this, I've made—reparation. I almost gave up once. But then—I came here; you talked to me as to anyone else; and I went on.

"I thought I would not have to do any more when I finished this, but there is so much more work still to be done! So many other diseases, bad ones, that nobody's been able to do much with, that a man feels it's up to him to—keep at them." She felt the convulsive clutch of his arm.

"Yes, and you can conquer them!"

"If you will help me, I know I can; but I need your help, for I haven't got hardened to the way I must work. I shall be able to go on with my work with the animals in the city only if I can come back often and be among the little animals here where no one touches them or interferes with them in any way. I want to get entirely away from my work in the city when I come here, so I want you to know no more about it and try to understand no more. Thousands of women could understand, but they couldn't help me. You can help me most by helping me forget while I am here. I want the little animals still to think I am like you, so they won't be more afraid of me, and Dicky will see them come to me just as to you."

He hurried from her and down to where old Oliver held his horse, but before he had mounted Elizabeth ran after him.

"You must go, I know. No, don't get down. I only wanted to tell you that I've found where the little foxes have their hole on North Mountain. I'll show it to you when you come back. They let me come very near; and you can go nearer. I didn't understand how it could be before. You see, they are less afraid of you than they were of even—my husband."

Miss Judith

by

CRITTENDEN
MARRIOTT

Author of "Sally Castleton, Southerner," etc.



AT the edge of the ford Judith's horse checked, changing from his long, easy lope to a jarring trot, and finally stopping altogether as his dainty fore hoofs splashed into the chilly water of the river. Judith clucked to him, shaking the reins, and he strode forward step by step. In mid-stream he stopped, thigh deep, stretched out his long, velvety neck and drank slowly and daintily.

Judith, perched upon him, her feet lifted well above the swirling water, moved uneasily and cocked her pretty ears, listening to a dull muttering far away under the Northern sky. She was realizing that she had really heard that muttering all day long, though for hours she had not noticed it, and for other hours she had not known it for what it was. She realized that she had heard it when she had waked in the chilly dawn, had heard it as she poured her father's coffee, had heard it as she had cantered off to visit a girl friend ten miles away.

Among the trees, beneath which she had been riding, the rattling of the chill

ILLUSTRATED
BY
DOUGLAS
DUER

breeze in the leafless branches had drowned it; but in the open, above the broad waters of the ford, it was unmistakable. It was the thunder of heavy guns.

Judith shivered slightly—not from fear, for three years of war had dulled even the menace of cannon—but because the low muttering roused in her heart thoughts that for three years she had tried to bury deep out of all recollection—thoughts of a dark-eyed Northern lad, just out of West Point, whose sister she had been visiting when the guns of Sumter, breaking in on her dawning romance, had called her home and had called Philip Thorne to his regiment. Their parting had been brief. Both had known that speech would be worse than useless and both had bowed to the divided duty that called them; but both had been very sure that somehow, some time, somewhere, they should meet again.

Since then Judith had heard no word of or from him. She knew that he had been assigned to the Fortieth New York, but she knew nothing more, not even whether he was alive or dead. Fiercely

loyal to the South, she had tried to put him out of her mind, and for the most part she had succeeded.

But the throbbing guns stirred memory and pulses alike, demanding the relief by action, and she urged her horse on feverishly till he gained the red-mud flat of the other shore and scrambled up the clayey bank beyond.

As they breasted the rise, their shadows lengthened enormously, pointing the way between long autumnal fields, smoldering in the last red rays of the sun, toward a distant and even redder ridge, beyond which lay her home.

As her horse plunged swiftly down the intervening swale, the sun dropped out of sight and the swift Southern dusk came hurrying on. But the red glow behind the ridge did not fade. Rather it increased, and before Judith topped the rise she knew with sickening certainty what she would see beyond it.

Nor was she wrong. Far away, beside the road, a pillar of fire streamed up against the sky. As the swirls of heat caught them, the sentinel trees tossed their branches, crowned with pennons of yellow flame. From them eddying smoke rolled upward to join the low-hung clouds and help reflect the crimson menace.

Judith Randolph saw it all as she raced up the drive. Then she forgot it and everything else as her eyes fell on two ancient negroes, a man and a woman, who stood with bowed heads above a body that lay stretched upon the grass.

Judith needed no telling to know that it was her father and that he was dead. Too old to march, too old to fight, violence had sought him out in the home of his ancestors.

Judith's face was gray and pinched as she looked down. "Tell me about it, Uncle Enoch," she ordered.

The old man glanced swiftly aside. He dared not meet the girl's eyes. But the woman burst into sobs. "Oh, Miss Judy! Oh, my baby! Oh, Miss Judy! please cry! Cry foh yo' ole mammy." She moved forward, stretching out the arms that in earlier years had cradled her young mistress.

But Judith put her aside. "Not now, mammy!" she said. "Not now! I want

to know who did this. Uncle Enoch, answer me!"

"It was the Yankees, Miss Judy, ma'am."

"I know that! I want to know more. Don't be afraid; I can bear it. How did it happen?" Her voice was level, toneless.

"They come a-runnin' up, a whole passel of 'em. The men swarms all over de place, in de barns, and in de smoke-house. The officer he stomps up on the po'ch, jest as Massa Randolph comes out. I aint heerd what he say, but he ain' had time to say much when Hector—"

"Hector?"

"Yes'm. That ole bulldog, Hector. He comes a-flyin' out of the do' and catches that Yankee officer by the leg. Now, you know, Miss Judy, ole Hector aint got no teeth to bite with, but he looks mighty dangerous an' that Yankee officer he draws his pistol and shoots Hector dead. Massa Randolph sees what he's gwine to do an' grabs at his arm to try and stop him and the officer shoots again an' Massa Randolph tumbles down. The Yankee he looks kinder sick; he stoops and feels Massa Randolph an' he sees it aint no use, an' just about as he straightens up, Mandy here yells 'Fire' an' the whole place is a-blazin'. I don't rightly know what comes nex', I was so skeered like; but by the time me and Mandy had done got Massa Randolph out here on the grass, the whole kit and bilin' of the Yankees was gone—an Massa Randolph was done daid."

The girl listened in silence. She stared at the dead face on the grass; then she turned slowly and looked at the house. The roof had fallen in and the upper walls had crumbled. Only the great stone chimney and the stone under-story still stood; the gaping windows of the latter glowed red. For a long time she stared at it with eyes dry and crystal bright, set in a face of granite.

The negroes watched her, nudging each other and shifting their feet uneasily, staring, now at the sod, now at the dead form upon it.

A clatter of hoofs and a jingling of metal broke the spell. The negroes looked thankfully up and the girl turned

dully as a squad of Confederate cavalry galloped up.

A young officer sprang from his horse. His quick eyes read the story as he came, and his lips were grim as he bowed before the girl.

"Can I do anything, madam?" he asked, wasting no words.

Judith stared at him. "Nothing!" she answered.

The young man hesitated. "Madam!" he said, at last, "I am not very old and not very wise. I do not dare to offer you comfort save only this: Colonel Randolph had lived a long and useful life. It is not for us to grudge him a man's death."

Judith's eyes changed. "No!" she answered, and her voice was keen as the sweep of a sword. "No! I do not grudge him his rest. If he had died in fair fight, neither I nor any other of my name would have wept. But to die like this—murdered on his doorstep—"

"Murdered!" The subaltern's tones were startled. He began to understand.

"Yes! Murdered!" The girl recited Enoch's tale. She spoke stonily, framing the words with difficulty, as if her lips were frozen, yet going on somehow to the end. Her mind, indeed, was still numb from the shock, but something within her, some nameless thing that was not she, possessed her faculties. Her lips spoke words that her brain had not formulated.

"Murder is murder," she finished. "Even in war it is murder. Surely, a crime like this cannot go unpunished."

The boy shook his head. "I'm afraid it will, ma'am," he answered reluctantly. "The Yankees fight fair; I'll say that for them; an' I reckon they'd punish whoever did this if they knew. But it's mighty hard for them to know, ma'am, mighty hard. And there'd be excuses and all that. And it's war time and—I'll get General Carter to send word over to the Yankee general, but I'm afraid— You see, we don't even know who the devils were."

Abruptly Judith turned to the negroes. "Uncle Enoch!" she said. "What did the officer look like? Did you hear his name? What was his rank?"

Uncle Enoch hesitated. "He was young

like, Miss Judy," he said, "—young an' kinder dark complected. I 'specks he must have been a general. His clo'es was kinder dusty, but he had a heap of gold braid about him."

"Do you know his regiment? Did you see any letters on his cap or his collar or on those of any of his men?" The girl's persistency did not relax; a deadly finality ran through her words.

Uncle Enoch shook his head, but Mandy broke out: "He had '40 N. Y.' on his cap, Miss Judy," she cried. "I done seen it. An' when he run away he done drop dis here book." She held out a red morocco pocket-book. "I aint had no time to look at it yet."

Judith's eyes dilated. Into their stony despair there crept a look of dread. "Not that, dear God, not that!" she prayed beneath her breath. Hesitatingly she put out her hand and took the book. Across its cover, stamped in gold letters, ran the name "Philip Thorne." It came open in her hand and from beneath a flap her own pictured face smiled up at her.

"Philip Thorne!" she gasped. "Philip Thorne! Oh, my God! Philip Thorne!"

The young Confederate caught the words and nodded. "That's who!" he cried. "There's a Yankee captain named Thorne who's been raiding along our front off and on for two or three weeks. He's never done anything like this before, but I reckon it's he and his men, all right." He hesitated. "I'm on rather urgent duty," he added reluctantly. "Can't I do something for you before I go? Can't I notify anybody?"

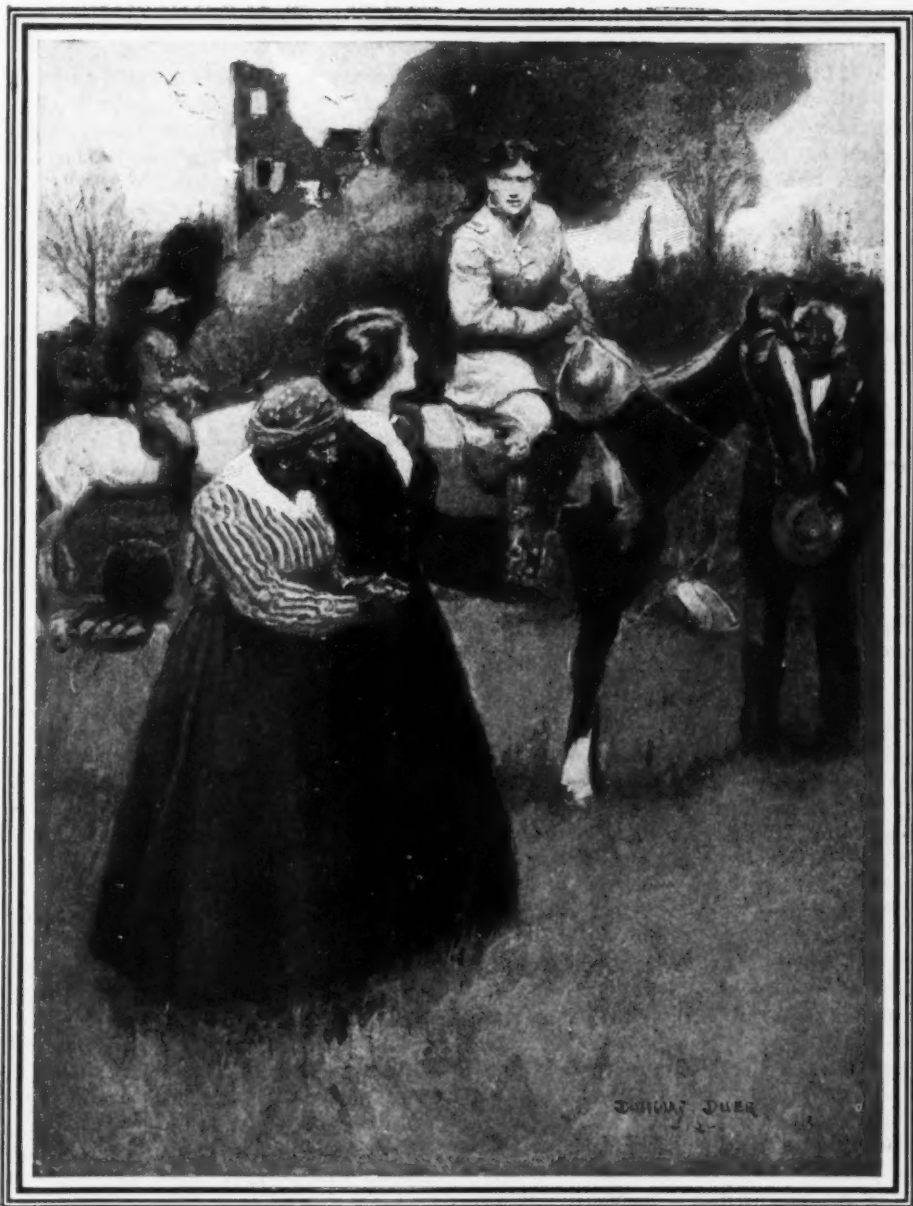
Judith shook her head. "My brothers—died—a year ago," she said slowly. "I am the only one left." Her voice changed; in it rang the clang of metal. "Would you like to capture this Captain Thorne?" she asked.

"Capture him? I certainly would. But—"

"If he is captured, will he be tried for the murder of my father?" Her words were a challenge. A cold devil lurked in her eyes.

"Why, yes! Yes, I think so. I'm sure he would. But—"

The girl cut ruthlessly across his stammerings. "Who is in command of our forces?" she questioned.



"Say to General Carter," requested the girl, "that I ask him to keep close watch on the flag-pole. If he sees a white flag on it, it means that Captain Thorne is my prisoner."

The boy stared. He could not follow the convolutions of her mind, so he answered simply, "General Carter."

"My father knew him well. Shall you see him soon?"

"To-night, probably."

"Say to him that Miss Judith Randolph, daughter of Colonel Ishan Randolph, is living in the mill on her father's place—you see it yonder, sir!" She pointed. "That dead pine half a mile beyond it we call the flag-pole pine; it

is rigged with halliards and is visible for many miles. Say to General Carter that I ask him to keep as close a watch as possible on that flag-pole for the next few days. If at any time he sees a white flag on it by day or a lantern by night, it means that Captain Thorne is my prisoner. Let him send a squad of cavalry at once, and—"

"But—but—good heavens! You don't mean to decoy— It's—it's— Some things are not fair even in war—"

"This is not war; this is criminal justice. Kindly deliver my message to General Carter."

An hour before, the boy had been the elder. But Judith had aged fast. There was no longer doubt as to which held the ascendancy.

"Yes! Of course," he stammered. "Yes! I'll tell him what you say. I'll tell him—"

"Thank you, sir. Good day!"

The boy looked at her for a moment; then he drew himself up, saluted, and turned to his men. An instant later the troop jingled away.

An hour afterward, by the last rays of the dying day, Judith watched the negroes lay her father in a shallow grave. In those days the ground was ever greedy. Funeral customs are designed for the living; the dead take no account of them; in war they must be hastened to save the living from going mad. Judith bent and kissed her father's forehead.

As she rose, the first puffs of a coming wind fanned her cheek. Far-off she heard it rushing over the woodland, nearer and nearer, gathering force as it came. Into the open space it burst, fanning the dying coals of the fire into slanting flags and bending the singed trees. Its voice prophesied snow and winter cold. Tremblingly old Uncle Enoch approached his mistress. "Miss Judy, ma'am," he said, humbly, "it aint for a nigger like me to say nothin' to the likes of you, ma'am. But I'se known you sence you was a baby, Miss Judy, an' I'se been your pa's nigger for fifty years an'—an'— Oh, Miss Judy, ma'am! Don't harden yo' heart. Don't go a-seekin' revenge. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. Don' I know it. Ain' I known it my own self. You'll be happy again, Miss Judy, happy

again, if you only wont harden yo' heart and will leave vengeance to the Lord. It's His privilege, an' He'll take it good and plenty, in His own time, Miss Judy, ma'am."

Judith listened, but her face did not change. She looked straight through the ebony face. "Thank you, Uncle Enoch!" she said to him. "I don't care to hear you now. Later, when Captain Thorne—" Enoch could see her muscles contract. He shrank from the fierceness in her blue eyes, and bent humbly to his task.

When he had finished, she called him and Mandy. "Uncle Enoch," she said, wearily, "I want you to take a letter north for me. You can come back later if you like. If Aunt Mandy will stay with me for a while I will be glad."

"Course I'll stay!"

"Very well! Come to the mill now. I will write the note at once. It looks like snow. Uncle Enoch, perhaps you had better start to-night."

"Jes' as you say, Miss Judy." Enoch was old, but he was rugged—strong hickory, capable of great endeavor. He was loyal to the uttermost. Judith knew that he would do and say what she told him, no more, no less.

The mill was a not uncomfortable refuge. Years before, Judith's brothers had taken possession of its disused upper story, establishing there a second home, far dearer to them than their rooms in the big house. Since they had gone to the war the doors had been locked, but Judith knew where the key was hidden and knew that it would give her access to shelter and to some, at least, of the comforts of life. She went to the mill and made herself at home and lay down to wait and watch for what the morrow might bring.

That night it snowed. Looking out with the first peep of dawn, Judith saw a world as white and clean as it might have been on the first morning of creation. The scars of the fire were buried from sight, leaving only the promise of the day when they should be obliterated altogether. Under foot the snow lay deep; overhead it clung in icy drapery to the trees, sheathing every branch and every twig in glittering mail. Judith, watching, saw the sun spring up and the

still whiteness tremble into prismatic fire, each individual speck of ice shifting from blue to red, from red to gold, and back again to blue, bewildering, coruscating, magnificent.

After a time she glimpsed a dark shadow, plodding afoot through the snow toward the mill. He came slowly, keeping among the trees, evidently trying to approach unseen. Probably he would have succeeded had eyes less sharp been watching for him. But Judith saw and knew him while he was still afar off. Her strained blue eyes grew cold as steel. Her mouth straightened into a red streak, curveless, unrelenting. He had come promptly.

She went down the steep stairs and waked Mandy and sent her to hoist the white signal on the dead tree. "Take my horse and ride fast," she ordered, briefly. "Hoist the signal and stay at the tree till our cavalry come. Then bring them to the mill."

The woman stared askance at her mistress' rigid face and crept away, trembling.

Through a slit in the boards beside the door Judith watched her visitor approach. He had come across the bare ridge—the ridge over which the cavalry would come; he had come through the belt of woodland at its foot; he must still cross the strip of open field that lay between the trees and the mill. Across the field, to the right, Judith could see the naked chimney towering above what had once been her home. The sight steeled her.

At the door at last, the visitor halted, staring doubtfully. He was a young man, sufficiently handsome, with dark hair and eyes—a manly-looking youth to all appearance. He wore no uniform; Judith noted the fact with grim satisfaction. Round his mouth were lines that Judith had never seen before. War is a stern workman; his chisel graves deep.

Judith opened the door and stepped out.

"This way, Captain Thorne," she called. "Come in! I have been expecting you."

The man straightened up. The look of anxious watchfulness on his face vanished, changing to one of delight. With outstretched hands he sprang forward.

"Judith!" he cried. "Judith! At last!"

The girl shrank inside the doorway, avoiding his touch. She had not counted on this. The terms on which they had parted warranted no such warmth of greeting. "Come in," she gasped. "You must not be seen."

The young man must have been very sure of his welcome, for with a single motion he entered the house and caught Judith in his arms.

"Darling! Darling!" he cried. "Darling! How I have longed for this day. How I have prayed for it. Three years, Judith, three years!"

Judith felt her soul slipping from her. For an instant the world went round and round. The white oblong of the door danced before her eyes. Then, with a passion that tautened her muscles to bands of steel, she thrust the man away.

"You dare!" she gasped, red wrath gleaming in her eyes. "You dare!"

The man straightened like a tree whipping back from the thrust of the wind. His face went grey.

"Pardon me!" he breathed. "I did not—know—I thought—if I have presumed—" His voice was thick. He did not finish.

Judith ignored his words. "You dare!" she cried again. "You dare! Here! Within sight of the house you burned and the grave of him you murdered! You dare!"

Bewilderment showed on Captain Thorne's face. "I beg your pardon," he said, stiffly. "I do not know what you mean. I am a soldier. Your friends are in rebellion against my government. I have been fighting them for three years. You knew that before you sent for me. As for the rest, I have never burned a home, and certainly I have never murdered anyone. Perhaps you will explain."

"I will!" Judith's breath came fast. "Look behind you—through that door. See that chimney above the trees. Does it convey no meaning to your eyes? Do you see nothing familiar in its surroundings?"

"Nothing!"

"Is your memory so short? Then do you recognize this?" She held out the pocketbook.

Thorne bent and looked. Then he took it from her hand. "My pocketbook!" he exclaimed, wondering. "How did you



Judith ran desperately, trying to reach the bare bushes at the far end of the meadow. . . She had almost reached



them when a shout told her that she had been seen. . . . Judith knew that farther straightaway flight was useless.

get it?" For a moment he seemed to forget the girl's hostility.

Judith's tense nerves gave way. "Liar! Hypocrite!" she cried. "Do you want me to despise you more than I hate you? That pocketbook was picked up yesterday beside the body of my father, whom you had shot down like a dog on his own threshold—yonder!" She pointed through the door. "Now stop this mockery of pretense."

"Ah!" Thorne let his breath go sharply. "Miss Randolph," he said, slowly, "you are mistaken. I have never been in this part of the country till now. I have shot no man down upon his own doorstep. As for the pocketbook, it was stolen from me a week ago, along with my coat, by a deserter."

He stopped, stricken dumb by the anguish of the girl's face; then he went on slowly.

"I have been scouting west of here for ten days. I got back late last night and found your note waiting for me. I got leave to answer it in person, chiefly because of its intimation that you had some valuable military information to give me. I should have known that this was impossible; in fact, I did know it, but—Well, I came!

"I was in camp for three hours only, but I heard that General Carter had sent a flag of truce to our lines with information that some of our men had done murder. The information was not necessary. The facts were already known and the men had already been arrested. They were a small body of deserters, criminals who had been conscripted from the slums of great cities, camp followers who hang on the skirts of every army, and a few local scoundrels who had joined them. I am sorry to say that three were from my own regiment.

"One of them, as I said, had stolen my coat and its contents. They tried to make their way North, but by some mischance they managed to get between the lines. And there they acted according to their instincts. At the court-martial several confessed to a murder—I did not know that it was of your father. Five were sentenced to be shot this morning, and the sentence undoubtedly has been carried out."

The man's voice rang truth. Not for a single instant did Judith question it. She was certain that he had told her the literal facts, neither more nor less. While he spoke she held her breath, her mouth slowly gaping in a red circle. When he finished, she staggered and caught at the wall; her fingers slipped and she dropped down upon the bench beside the door.

"I should have known—I should have known," she whispered, very fast and very shrill. "I should have known." Her face was dead white beneath her hair.

Thorne sprang forward to catch her. But she writhed herself backward, throwing up her hand to fend him off.

"No, no!" she gasped. "No, no!"

But Thorne persisted. Even he assumed a certain roughness of tone, thinking to shock her out of her misery.

"Nonsense!" he protested. "Nonsense! I can't blame you!" This assertion came hard, but he got it out bravely. "The evidence was against me, and it was very strong. Many a man has been hanged on less!"

"Hanged! Hanged!"

"Certainly. However, it's all right now. Let's forget—"

"Forget? Forget?" Judith sprang to her feet. She clutched at her breast. "Forget? When you are in the Confederate lines in citizen's clothes! When you came into them to seek information! When the Confederate cavalry is speeding towards you to give you the death of a spy? Forget! Forget! Shall I ever forget? Vengeance is God's privilege. I know it now. And I have betrayed you."

Thorne's face went gray. Like the girl, he knew truth when he heard it. He needed no detailed explanation. In an instant he read the sickening truth. Technically he was a spy—and not only technically but actually as well, for he knew that he could never have secured permission to venture into the Confederate lines had it not been for the hint of military information contained in Judith's letter. His life was forfeit—and it would be exacted of him. For he did not doubt that those who set the trap had taken good care that the quarry should not escape. He leaned against the door for a second. Then strength came back and his

temples swelled. By the Lord! he was not dead yet; he would—

Judith read his face and wrung her hands. Her thoughts quivered and leapt like the heart of a startled hare. "But where?" she gasped. "Where? The river is behind you—and beyond it is the South. The snow is before you. A child could follow your tracks across it. If I had a horse—but I have none. And the cavalry is coming! Wait—"

She sprang to the door and stared eastward, focusing her gaze upon the ridge over which the cavalry must come. A dark spot, prickled with fire, was moving downward across its whiteness.

"They are coming," she cried.

Abruptly into Thorne's heart there came a vast pity. He was to die! But the girl was to live. Instinctively he knew that his was the easier part. Death? Death was nothing. He had faced it daily for three years. But life, as she would live it—

Very gently he spoke—very pitifully, altogether forgetful of self.

"No!" he said. "You have not killed me. Never think it. I have juggled with fate once too often, that is all. I crossed the lines open-eyed. Let us say no more about it. But"—he forced himself to smile—"I came for something. I came to tell a girl that I loved her and to ask her if she loved me; to tell her that I have thought of her hour by hour and day by day; to ask her to give me her hand, her lips, her heart. Judith! Judith! Death won't be death if you can do that!"

Incredulously the girl stared at him. Her breath came in gasps. "You—love me—still?"

"Still? Always! To the end—and beyond it. Come!" He gathered her in his arms.

For a moment she lay; then she tore herself loose. "You shall not die!" she cried. "You shall *not* die!"

She spun round, a sudden possibility of self-sacrifice burning big in her eyes. "There's a chance! One chance! Only one! Come!" She ran to the back of the mill and threw open the door that led to the old tail-race. "Walk in this to the river," she ordered swiftly. "Then wade down the stream. Keep in shallow water close to the bank for a quarter of a mile.

Then hide under the bank and wait for night."

The man hesitated. "They'll know! They'll guess!"

"Not if I mislead them. Not if I lie to them. Go! For God's sake!"

"You—you'll be in no danger?"

"I? No! No! They're my *friends*! Go!"

"And—after this war is over—"

"Yes! I love you! I love you! Can't you see that I love you!"

She pushed him through the door and shot the heavy bolt behind him. Then, swiftly, she fled up the stairs to her brother's room, tearing her dress from her slim body as she went. Skirts, petticoats followed, dropping in a circle, till she stood half bare, slim, almost boyish. From a closet she snatched her brother's hunting suit, drew the unaccustomed nether garments over her slender legs and thrust her bare arms into the moth-eaten sleeves. Into a pair of men's boots she thrust her feet, and clattered down the stairs, jamming a broad-brimmed hat over her head, hiding her hair.

Out of the door she plunged, pausing on the threshold to lock it behind her and to cast a glance eastward. The cavalry was not in sight, but she knew they must be very near, and she began to run across the broad flat that stretched upstream from the mill. Her booted feet left a broad trail across the melting snow—a trail impossible to miss.

She ran desperately, trying to reach the bare bushes at the far end of the meadow before the cavalry should break cover. If she failed they would see her and would cut across to intercept her. If she succeeded they would go to the mill first and then follow her trail, enabling her to gain some precious moments. She knew that her disguise was no disguise at all except at a distance. At close quarters detection would be instant and inevitable.

But her strength failed rapidly. Her heavy boots slipped and spraddled as she ran, stumbling desperately. The pain in her ankles made her faint. If only she could reach the bushes! If only she could reach the bushes! They wavered and danced before her eyes. Another moment and—

She had almost reached them when a distant shout told her that she had been seen. She glanced around. There they came, two score of them, gray against the darker pines, facing the sunlight, bending forward, eager to the chase.

Judith knew that farther straight-away flight was hopeless. She was panting, tottering, scarcely able to move her heavy feet. Another moment and they would be upon her. She must play her last device.

She plunged among the bushes, kicking off her heavy boots as she did so. Close beside her ran the river, dark and deep. Two steps took her to the edge of the low bluff. Then her coat dropped from her and she dived far out.

The water boiled as she struck, rippling toward the shores. The swift current, high with rains, caught her, bearing her downward between the clay banks. Her bare arms, flashing in the sunlight, bore her on.

A hoarse challenge rang above the swirling tumult of the waters, but she did not heed it. The cold shock of the water had revived her, lending her fresh vigor, and she swam desperately on.

The shouting ceased, giving place to the pop, pop, pop of carbines. All about her the water splattered, spurting in hissing jets. She knew that the cavalymen were firing at her—at her, Judith Randolph. The Confederates, her own friends, her father's friends, were firing at *her*! She almost laughed at the absurdity.

Suddenly she ran upon something. It did not hurt her much, but it surprised her enormously. She had not seen anything in the way. She felt numb from

the shock. Her left arm still beat the water feebly, but her right arm felt suddenly heavy. It was dragging her down. She could no longer keep afloat. It occurred to her that after all it did not matter! She was very tired. Philip was safe by now and she could rest. Quite peacefully she sank, and the swift midstream, yellow with clay ravished from neglected fields, took her to itself.

On the bank the cavalry stood watching eagerly, but no body reappeared above the swirling water. At last the captain in command slipped his pistol back into its holster. "Fall in!" he ordered, curtly. "Mount! Forward! Trot!" Then, as the column jogged away, he turned to his lieutenant. "Well!" he said to the lieutenant, "Miss Randolph's had her revenge. By the way, I wonder where she is?"

The lieutenant shook his head. "At the mill, I suppose," he answered.

But Judith was not at the mill. No one was there but a frightened negress, who had crept down from the flagpole after the cavalry had come, and who was weeping and unavailingly seeking her young mistress. And so, after a time, the cavalry rode away.

But late that night, when the round moon shone small and far away in a blue-black sky, Philip Thorne staggered into the Union lines, bearing in his arms an unconscious but living form—the form of a girl, shot through the shoulder, half-drowned, but living—a girl that the river had flung at his feet as he waited beneath its banks, a girl willing to say with Ruth of old: "Whither thou goest I will go. . . . Thy people shall be my people and thy God my God."



The Baroness' Pearls

An adventure of the Hon. Derek
Tredgold, expert jewel thief

by
L. J. BEESTON

Author of "Red Diamonds," "Pauline March," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY M LEONE BRACKER

AND you have never met Ivan Dolokof, whose play we are seeing now?" lisped Madam Berenstein, fluffy and fair as a canary. "I have not, either. More's the pity; for we certainly shall never see that extraordinary man. He is an exile, my dears, somewhere in northern Russia, I believe. In the Trans-Baikal, of which I know nothing at all; which suggests to me terrible frozen swamps, and unhappy pine forests and grey skies which are forever weeping snowflakes, and the cries of wolves, and the bitter moaning of winds."

One had to be interested. Contrast compelled it. Here was Vienna's most fashionable theatre crowded with people enjoying a three-act drama of astonishing cleverness, the author of which was eating his heart out in the frozen wild.

Here the music of the entr'acte, perfume of flowers, gleams of flame from jewels, white shoulders of women, a deep drone of conversation; there—a desolation.

Pauline March, Madam Berenstein's guest that evening, waved her hand to some one who was looking up at the box. It was Armande Duverne.

"Is that our languid Armande?" went on Madam Berenstein, using her lace

fan. "His sonnets remind me of Ivan Dolokof's, without the dramatic touch, however. *Hélas*, it is really too bad that such a genius should be caged for life. As I say, Dolokof is an extraordinary man. A playwright, a duellist, a lover, a revolutionist; and greatly to be feared in all four capacities. As to the first, his satire pierces us this evening. Concerning the second, his too deadly use of the pistol caused an enforced resignation from his regiment of Austrian chasseurs. Regarding the third, he has been the nucleus of some notorious affairs, and is now in life and death the bound slave of Gabrielle de Lionzac. And touching the fourth, his interference in the Czar's government led to his entombment.

"But he is, above all, a brave fellow. You will recall that matter of how, when he was driving in the Corso with the Grand Duke Ladislas, some miscreant flung a bomb into the open carriage. Ivan Dolokof picked it up, and saying: 'Permit me to return your pretty bouquet, monsieur,' he tossed it at the feet of the assassin, who was blown to pieces by the explosion."

Pauline looked round at this, a sparkle in her blue eyes. Madame Berenstein translated it aright, for she said, "That elicits your admiration, *petite?*"



"And is he really so handsome as people make out?" asked Pauline

"Is it safe to admire such a man?" Pauline smiled.

"A year ago I would have dissuaded you. Now it is different. Not even the charming light in your eyes, *ma chérie*, could kindle a fire in the heart of Ivan Dolokof. Like *Romeo* of the olden time, he has been cured of his passions by a true love. *Rosamond* is no more for him. A *Juliet* is to him all the loveliness in the world, all the meaning of existence."

"Your speak of Gabrielle?"

"She. The Baroness de Lionzac."

"She is wedded."

"But not when Ivan Dolokof was arrested by the Russian police. Is it not sad? Our *Romeo* and *Juliet* are ensepulchred while alive. *Ciel*, if he was to escape—"

At that moment the curtain began to rise.

"Yes, yes?" said Pauline eagerly.

"I would not, in that case, give a pin's head for the life of her husband—Hush!"

The second act of the play commenced.

What had the story of the notorious Ivan Dolokof to do with me—the Honorable Derek Tredgold, society diamond thief, sharing that title with Pauline, the fair American, and Duverne, the French poet? I considered it no more, but watched Pauline, who was looking bewitchingly pretty. And then I glanced at the crescent of rubies which burned in Madame Berenstein's soft hair, which burned with a tint of blood, with the red of a horned moon rising over a marsh. Few women in the Austrian capital had finer jewels, which supplies you with the reason of the three of us being gathered together—Duverne, Pauline, myself.

But Madame Berenstein may still have her diamonds, untouched by us.

The moment the curtain was rung down on the second act she turned to Pauline and continued, as if no interval had passed: "It was this way, *chérie*: The Baron Xavier de Lionzac, the husband of Gabrielle, was Ivan Dolokof's friend. Nobody dreamed that the baron loved Gabrielle, who is the youngest daughter of an obscure Wallachian landowner. But he did, and he showed it in

the most frightful manner—by betraying Dolokof, whose secrets he shared, and so being the direct cause of Ivan's eternal exile. It is a long story, but that is the essence of it. And Lionzac did it so well that nobody suspected him at first—until he had married Gabrielle. Why did she give herself to him? A simple question with an old and simple answer, *fifine*—to save her father from ruin. The Baron Xavier is enormously rich; Ivan was sentenced for life. There you have it. *Voilà!*

"It is a profound pity. But then, it is Ivan Dolokof's own fault. Why did he, who is not a Russian subject, meddle with Nihilistic schemes which—ah, here comes our melancholy Armande. I was talking about you, monsieur. I remarked that your sonnets resemble those of Ivan Dolokof, but they have not his dramatic touch."

Duverne smiled, nodding to me. "Ah, ah, he is a dramatic fellow altogether," he replied easily. "Too much so, you will admit."

I noticed that Pauline, who was quite carried away by this love story, showed petulance at the interruption. She interposed:

"And the Baroness de Lionzac is unhappy?"

"Oh, I did not say so," replied Madame Berenstein. "She may have pardoned her husband for his treachery. A woman will always forgive the worst crime if it is committed for pure love of her. You have seen her, of course, although she does not show herself very much. Her husband is a little jealous. On the other hand, he lives but for her, for his treasure. And if there are some women who would not covet her husband, there is none who does not envy her her diamonds. Her necklace of Orient pearls—her dog-collar necklace of five rows of lustrous pearls. Ah!"

I saw Duverne's eyes glitter. Perhaps mine did.

"All this is very nice while they keep a tight hold on Ivan Dolokof," went on Madame Berenstein, "while that tiger is kept behind bars. But if he ever gets on the right side of the frontier, he will kill the baron in broad daylight. He has promised himself that revenge; and he will abide by the vow as he abides by

all his vows. There, I have talked myself hoarse. If I cannot have a vanilla ice—"

She stopped as another comer entered the box, a corpulent little chap with a bald head, ginger moustache, and gold *pince nez*. I had never seen Davis Berenstein, but I felt that Madame's husband was now with us. He bowed with effect to Pauline, who knew him—Pauline knows everyone—and kissed his wife's fingers. Then he said, adjusting his *pince nez*:

"I arrived at the station an hour ago, and after a change came on here with a piece of intelligence whispered to me in private, but which will be all over Vienna within a few hours. Ivan Dolokof has got away from the bear!"

"Escaped?" cried Madame Berenstein in so loud a tone that forty pairs of eyes glanced up at the box.

"And is over the frontier, there is every reason to believe."

"Oh, well done!" exclaimed Pauline. I thought she would clap her hands.

"Why, it is most extraordinary," gasped Madame Berenstein. "We were just talking about him, and—"

"Talking of the devil will make him appear," laughed her husband. "And Dolokof is a devil, you know. I heard the news from General Ferkoa, at the Foreign Office. Dolokof got clear on the march while being transferred with a batch to another prison settlement. He broke the chain which bound him to the gang, and killed with a single blow a lieutenant of Cossacks who tried to stop him. There's a long string of adventures, mythical perhaps, said to have befallen him on his way to the frontier. One cannot withhold admiration from a fellow like that, by Jove, although—although—Good God!"

What had happened? What was it that had driven the red blood from the speaker's cheeks and fixed his eyes in a frozen stare of astonishment? He had caught sight of—

Me.

The rest followed the direction of his extraordinary glare. I am bound to confess that I felt somewhat uncomfortable. Was it possible that Davis Berenstein suspected me of my undoubted design

upon his wife's jewels? Clearly this was out of the question. Then what in heaven's name—

"You—Monsieur Dolokof?" he said, huskily.

Pauline tittered; Duverne looked relieved, and Madame Berenstein flashed upon her husband angrily.

"Have you taken leave of your senses?" she demanded. "This gentleman is the Honorable Derek Tredgold, an Englishman."

Berenstein took off his *pince nez*, wiped it with a silk handkerchief and readjusted it. He said, in an incredulous tone: "I ask your pardon, Monsieur. But if you knew Ivan Dolokof as well as I do, you would readily forgive my error. I shall have to live many years before encountering another resemblance so truly wonderful."

"Derek, you ought to feel flattered," said Pauline demurely.

"At being mistaken for a tiger? Well, I'm not," I answered crossly. Something in Pauline's tone suggested mockery. Anyhow, I had heard enough of Ivan Dolokof, and with a slight bow to Berenstein, I left the box. As I went out, I heard him continue: "I fear I have offended that gentleman. All the same, he is Ivan's double—face, form, voice. If you, my dear, had not assured me—"

I lost the rest of the sentence. In a bad humor, I swung into the foyer.

I recalled in a sullen remembrance the flash of Pauline's eyes when Madame Berenstein spoke of this devil-may-care swaggering officer—or playwright—or Nihilist—whatever the fellow was. I reflected on the scarcely checked clapping of Pauline's hands when she heard of the fellow's escape. What then? Was I in love with Pauline? Well, you have seen in what terms I have written of Pauline March, in those other adventures of which I have told you. Do *you* think I ever loved her, really? If you can say definitely one way or the other, then you know more than I do.

I was roused from moroseness by a touch on the shoulder. A voice with an unmistakable thrill of excitement whispered in my ear:

"It's up to you, Derek! *Mon Dieu*, there is not a moment to be lost!"

It was Armande Duverne speaking, and some idea in his mind heated his eyes.

"The Berenstein sparklers? You see a chance—" I began.

"A fig for 'em," he cut me short. He glanced round. The play had recommenced, and no one was within earshot of us. "The collar of Orient pearls of the Baroness de Lionzac!" he whispered tensely. "It should be ours within a quarter of an hour."

"Who's going to get it?"

"You are."

"A quarter of an hour? Pardon my obtuseness if I fail to see—"

"Ah, *pardieu*, is it possible that you have failed to see—"

"You have wasted one of your fifteen minutes."

"True. Well, then, Ivan Dolokof—"

I blazed out: "Damn Ivan Dolokof!"

"With pleasure—in fourteen minutes of time, when you take your name again."

II

The raising of my eyebrows, the sharp clenching of my teeth, showed him that I saw his idea. It was excellent with the merit of swift, clean, dramatic action; it scintillated with the genius of inspiration. Yet I must own that the daring of it made me gasp.

I answered coolly: "As you observe, it must be now or never. Allow criticism. Berenstein was deceived by a perfect resemblance—so he says. The Baroness de Lionzac—Gabrielle, will regard me not with the eyes of acquaintanceship, but of a lover. They are infinitely more piercing, you will admit."

"I do. That danger is guarded, however. Madame Berenstein has just told me that Gabrielle is this evening at a violin performance of a young *protégée* of hers. I 'phoned the concert hall. It is emptying while we speak. The baroness will arrive at her house within ten minutes' time, therefore. Be outside. Let her see you as she steps from her automobile. If, like Berenstein, she is mistaken, the necklace is yours; if not, you walk away."

"Admirable! But if her husband is with her?"

"He is not. I 'phoned to his house. He was called out of the city unexpectedly an hour ago. You understand what that means? He has wind of Dolokof's freedom, and has bolted instantaneously to avoid a pistol shot. Our baron is a coward, it seems. Your field, then, is clear."

"I congratulate you, my dear Armande! A third point, however: When Gabrielle discovers the deception, she will make a move against me."

"She will do nothing of the sort. What! Confess to her husband, or to anybody, that she gave her pearls to Ivan Dolokof? It is not likely. I will not insult your intelligence by suggesting just how you obtain the pearls. To *you* it is an easy matter."

I bowed.

"Good-by, and good luck, Derek."

"*Bon soir*. Pray tell Pauline what we are doing."

"She shall know at once."

I was in the open street the next moment, face to face with as exciting a piece of work as ever I have handled, and which I would not take on again for all the jewels which the seas hide.

A handsomely-tipped taxi chauffeur whirled me towards the Ringstrasse. That Duverne, who had planned everything in a few minutes, had omitted to supply the small detail of the Baron de Lionzac's address, made me smile. I obtained it from my chauffeur friend. I got out near to the Franz-Josef's Quay and walked to one of the fine boulevards of the Ringstrasse. Lights burned in one or two windows of the baron's house, a tall, somber building with wrought-iron balconies, an old-fashioned house with a dismal archway such as one sees in old-world Saragossa.

The idea which had fired Duverne's brain had lost nothing of its heat passing into mine. It was altogether excellent. I realized as much with a quiet, tranquil confidence that pointed to absolute success. The painter, the short story-writer, will know what I mean. There comes an inspiration. The thing is there. Scarcely need one think. The project works itself to a conclusion without a hitch.

Once let the Baroness de Lionzac make

the mistake of Berenstein, and chance would do the rest for us. At rare moments one has a perfect trust in chance.

I mingled with the people passing up and down under the linden trees, on the electric-lighted boulevard—mostly sweet-hearts whose business was not mine, and mine certainly not theirs. A closed carriage drawn by a pair of bays came rolling down the smooth roadway. I had looked for an automobile, but while I doubted, the coachman drew up his animals before the house of my brief vigil. A lackey opened the door of the carriage and a lady stepped out. Was this the baroness, I wondered? I advanced so as to intercept her, yet seeming to do so inadvertently. Before she looked up, I noticed her pallor, and her red lips that seemed to tremble, and the charming daintiness of features and form. Suddenly, she raised her eyes and looked straight at me.

In that gaze there was no gleam of recognition.

For half a second I cursed Berenstein. I drew aside, lifting my hat, on my lips a word of apology for my clumsiness in getting into her way. It was never uttered, for she checked it with a haughty glance and the coldly-uttered words:

"Oh, I had forgotten. Come in. I will see you about that business in a minute, monsieur!"

It was well done, under the eyes of her lackeys, and as clear to me as sunshine. Berenstein was right, after all. I was Dolokof's double. The baroness believed me to be her lover, and by an effort of self-control truly wonderful she had disguised her recognition and her emotion before her servants. I said to myself, as I followed her into the house:

"But she could not have done it had she not heard of Ivan Dolokof's escape. She was half expecting him."

A murmured word to a footman and I was shown into a room where everything seemed red, with a deep-shaded lamp casting a soft, crimson light. There was another door in a recess by a magnificent marble fireplace. I had barely time to look round when the baroness came into the apartment. She pushed to the door with a quick, nervous gesture.

"Ivan!" she said, in a half-stifled tone,

pressing her left hand upon her bosom, "is this right—fair—to me?"

The wild agony in her eyes touched me with shame—an emotion with which I have nothing to do. I resolved to push my business to a swift conclusion. Nearly the width of the room divided us. I answered her sternly:

"Be easy. I have not come to make love. I will not even reproach you. The past is dead as my hopes. It is your help that I want, and it may soon be given."

She came forward as far as the table, resting her finger-tips upon it and looking earnestly at me.

"You have changed, Ivan. Even your voice has changed."

There was no cause of fear in that note of simple sorrow. I remained silent, with arms folded, gloomily regarding her, and with every nerve in me on the alert.

"But three years of exile would change you, of course. I will not ask if you have suffered greatly. I have."

Two big tears rolled down her pale cheeks.

"We need not prolong this scene," I said curtly. "Old wounds are best left alone. You have not answered my question: will you help me?"

"Yes, Ivan."

"I am still in a position of grave peril. True, the Russian frontier is behind me, but there is a certain lieutenant of Cossacks whom I killed, and on his account pressure will be brought to bear for my arrest here. I am penniless. I have got to get away and hide in some corner of the world. I want fifty thousand florins instantly."

"You shall have then, Ivan," she said quietly.

At that moment the door by the fireplace fell open an inch or two, just as a door will that has not been quite closed. I darted a swift and uneasy glance. The firelight threw the recess behind it into shadow.

"You shall have it," she repeated, "tomorrow morning."

"Too late! The delay will be a fatal one to me."

"But I must see my bankers. Such a sum—"

"It must be that or its equivalent."



Slowly she removed the pearls from round her throat and held them out to me across the table.

Anxiety deepened in her eyes. She pressed a handkerchief to her pale forehead as if to numb some pain.

"What would you have me do, Ivan?" she pleaded.

"What? I will tell you! When you saw me you showed more terror than affection—Gabrielle. The idea that I came for my just measure of revenge haunted you. You shrink now. You believe that I intend to kill your husband. Well, if I meet him I shall shoot him like a dog. Can you blame me? He is already as good as in eternity. But I do not want to meet him. I would rather curse him from a distance, and save myself. That is why I descend to this humiliation of begging your instant assistance. You compel me to drink the dregs. Well, then, so be it. Those pearls round your throat—perhaps you would like me to kneel?"

Slowly she removed them, with ever so much of sad reproach in her eyes. She held them out to me across the table.

"I deserve any bitterness you may heap upon me," she said gently. "Forget me, Ivan. God—God pity us both."

She released the strings of pearls. Her head drooped. I turned towards the door through which I had entered. It was flung back. I caught the gleam of a pistol thrust well-nigh into my face, with a deadly pair of eyes behind it. Gabrielle screamed. I threw up my hands, though I seemed to feel already the searing flame and the thunder-shock.

Neither came. For a most ugly couple of seconds I stared into a black-bearded countenance which had lost control of itself, the nerves twitching strongly, and splashes of grey whence the blood had ebbed. I had no necessity of Gabrielle's wild cry, "Xavier!" to assure me that I had run up against the Baron de Lionzac.

Two ugly seconds, in which I perceived Duverne's blunder! The baron had made a feint of leaving the city. He knew that Ivan Dolokof would visit his house, and he wanted to take him unawares. It was a matter of killing or being killed.

And yet his finger did not press the trigger. He had fully intended beyond the shadow of a doubt to blow my brains out, yet they were still in my head.

The inference was simple enough. In that moment of concentrated, hellish, murderous energy, he suspected the mistake. Possibly terror of Ivan Dolokof lent him a deeper penetration even than the hopeless love of his wife; but I am inclined to believe that my action of throwing up my hands suggested the truth to him. The real Dolokof would not have done that.

I had my nerve back first. "The reason of this amazing conduct?" I smiled. "I address the Baron de Lionzac, I presume?"

He entered the room, watching me with the utmost steadiness. "Who are you?" he demanded thickly.

I slipped the string of pearls up my left sleeve.

"Pardon me," I replied, fencing for time. "You have broken my wits to pieces—"

"You might as well shake that necklace from your sleeve," he interrupted, cooling rapidly, "and waste no lies on me. I heard every word of your talk with my wife. It is not your fault that you are not lying dead on this carpet. Once more, who are you?"

I let the pearls run down into my palm, and I handed them to Gabrielle. "Whoever I am," I said to her, "my name is not Ivan Dolokof."

She regarded me with an expression which time has not yet effaced from recollection, and she glided from the room without touching the pearls.

The baron faced me with his pistol resting in the hollow of his crooked left arm. The grey splashes had faded from his face, and its appearance had benefited a good deal. His small eyes seemed to contract into two piercing points as he regarded me.

"There are three courses open to me," said he with slow deliberation. "I believe I shall give you your choice. One, I may shoot you where you stand, for a heartless deception upon my wife and an attempt to rob her of jewels. Two, I may call in the police and get rid of you that way." He stopped, looking me through and through.

I have been in happier situations. I showed him a careless front, but the game seemed lost beyond hope of recovery.

ery. I answered easily, taking a seat:

"I do not think very highly of your propositions so far, baron. I accept the third."

"Blindly?"

"Yes, for I see that it is going to be out of the ordinary."

He nodded grimly. "I mean to take advantage of your good appearance. Have you a card?"

I proffered him one, dropping all concealment as useless. His brows went up a trifle at the inscription.

"So much the better," said he. "I will ask no questions, though it is clear that you are a jewel thief. You were after my wife's pearls? You may have them yet. I have heard of your kind, and their infernal cleverness. You have showed some knowledge of my affairs, which was no doubt necessary to your schemes. My relations with Ivan Dolokof are, therefore, no secret with you. You are aware that he intends to kill me. That is quite true. He is in the city at the present moment. He was seen this evening dining in a café in the Graben; and he boasted that he would interview me before midnight. He will therefore come to this house. That is Dolokof's way. His reputation rests on the most unconventional actions. Presumably exile has not tamed the madman in him. Listen to me. He will either attempt to kill me outright or force me to fight with him. And I will not fight because, in the first place, my wife's name will be dragged into the affair; and because, in the second place, I shall probably fall, and I prefer to live rather than to die.

"Here, then, is my offer to you. Remain here, in this room, until Ivan Dolokof comes. You will tell him that I am away, and you will do so in a fashion which need not be too impertinent, for he observes the least shadow of impoliteness. Do I make myself clear?"

I lighted a cigarette slowly. Oh, yes, the third proposition was palpable enough. I was saved from disgrace—at a price. "I warn you that there is not much time for deliberation."

I writhed inwardly. It was not that I was afraid of this fire-eating Dolokof, whom I detested without having set eyes on him; but my stomach rose against

the childish folly of a duel. Heavens, into what a hole had I got myself! I answered, at length:

"I am to kill this man? That is your meaning?"

"You will provoke him to an encounter—yes."

"It does not follow that he will fall."

"Granted. Only if you do not kill him on the field he will most assuredly kill you."

"In the latter event you will be no better off."

"I take my chance of that."

"But this is intolerable. I have no quarrel—"

"You should have thought of that before you came here. You are at liberty to refuse; in which case you leave this house in custody. Bah, you are young, and your nerves are splendid. Then you know the use of a pistol?"

"A duelling pistol—no."

"So much the worse for you."

"You are sure of me, then?"

"If you do not accept, you are lost."

"You compel me to murder a man, or be murdered by him. It is monstrous!"

"So was your vile trick, Monsieur Tredgold."

At that instant we both heard a furious ringing of a bell. The Baron de Lionzac started violently, and the grey splashes re-appeared on his cheeks. He was a coward, and no mistake!

He said, in an altered tone: "I should not be surprised if that is Dolokof. Your answer!"

I looked him up and down. "You had better make yourself scarce, baron," I advised.

"We understand one another," said he, and went out.

To think that I was under the thumb of such a creature!

What was I going to do? I had no certain idea. Such a situation does not obtrude itself in a life very frequently. My first act, however, was to take the rope of pearls from the table where I had dropped it and to deposit it in my pocket. That was part of the bargain. I lighted another cigarette and crossed over to the fire. The baron must have given instructions, for at that instant the door of the room was opened and a

Anxiety deepened in her eyes. She pressed a handkerchief to her pale forehead as if to numb some pain.

"What would you have me do, Ivan?" she pleaded.

"What? I will tell you! When you saw me you showed more terror than affection—Gabrielle. The idea that I came for my just measure of revenge haunted you. You shrink now. You believe that I intend to kill your husband. Well, if I meet him I shall shoot him like a dog. Can you blame me? He is already as good as in eternity. But I do not want to meet him. I would rather curse him from a distance, and save myself. That is why I descend to this humiliation of begging your instant assistance. You compel me to drink the dregs. Well, then, so be it. Those pearls round your throat—perhaps you would like me to kneel?"

Slowly she removed them, with ever so much of sad reproach in her eyes. She held them out to me across the table.

"I deserve any bitterness you may heap upon me," she said gently. "Forget me, Ivan. God—God pity us both."

She released the strings of pearls. Her head drooped. I turned towards the door through which I had entered. It was flung back. I caught the gleam of a pistol thrust well-nigh into my face, with a deadly pair of eyes behind it. Gabrielle screamed. I threw up my hands, though I seemed to feel already the searing flame and the thunder-shock.

Neither came. For a most ugly couple of seconds I stared into a black-bearded countenance which had lost control of itself, the nerves twitching strongly, and splashes of grey whence the blood had ebbed. I had no necessity of Gabrielle's wild cry, "Xavier!" to assure me that I had run up against the Baron de Lionzac.

Two ugly seconds, in which I perceived Duverne's blunder! The baron had made a feint of leaving the city. He knew that Ivan Dolokof would visit his house, and he wanted to take him unawares. It was a matter of killing or being killed.

And yet his finger did not press the trigger. He had fully intended beyond the shadow of a doubt to blow my brains out, yet they were still in my head.

The inference was simple enough. In that moment of concentrated, hellish, murderous energy, he suspected the mistake. Possibly terror of Ivan Dolokof lent him a deeper penetration even than the hopeless love of his wife; but I am inclined to believe that my action of throwing up my hands suggested the truth to him. The real Dolokof would not have done that.

I had my nerve back first. "The reason of this amazing conduct?" I smiled. "I address the Baron de Lionzac, I presume?"

He entered the room, watching me with the utmost steadiness. "Who are you?" he demanded thickly.

I slipped the string of pearls up my left sleeve.

"Pardon me," I replied, fencing for time. "You have broken my wits to pieces—"

"You might as well shake that necklace from your sleeve," he interrupted, cooling rapidly, "and waste no lies on me. I heard every word of your talk with my wife. It is not your fault that you are not lying dead on this carpet. Once more, who are you?"

I let the pearls run down into my palm, and I handed them to Gabrielle. "Whoever I am," I said to her, "my name is not Ivan Dolokof."

She regarded me with an expression which time has not yet effaced from recollection, and she glided from the room without touching the pearls.

The baron faced me with his pistol resting in the hollow of his crooked left arm. The grey splashes had faded from his face, and its appearance had benefited a good deal. His small eyes seemed to contract into two piercing points as he regarded me.

"There are three courses open to me," said he with slow deliberation. "I believe I shall give you your choice. One, I may shoot you where you stand, for a heartless deception upon my wife and an attempt to rob her of jewels. Two, I may call in the police and get rid of you that way." He stopped, looking me through and through.

I have been in happier situations. I showed him a careless front, but the game seemed lost beyond hope of recovery.

ery. I answered easily, taking a seat:

"I do not think very highly of your propositions so far, baron. I accept the third."

"Blindly?"

"Yes, for I see that it is going to be out of the ordinary."

He nodded grimly. "I mean to take advantage of your good appearance. Have you a card?"

I proffered him one, dropping all concealment as useless. His brows went up a trifle at the inscription.

"So much the better," said he. "I will ask no questions, though it is clear that you are a jewel thief. You were after my wife's pearls? You may have them yet. I have heard of your kind, and their infernal cleverness. You have showed some knowledge of my affairs, which was no doubt necessary to your schemes. My relations with Ivan Dolokof are, therefore, no secret with you. You are aware that he intends to kill me. That is quite true. He is in the city at the present moment. He was seen this evening dining in a café in the Graben; and he boasted that he would interview me before midnight. He will therefore come to this house. That is Dolokof's way. His reputation rests on the most unconventional actions. Presumably exile has not tamed the madman in him. Listen to me. He will either attempt to kill me outright or force me to fight with him. And I will not fight because, in the first place, my wife's name will be dragged into the affair; and because, in the second place, I shall probably fall, and I prefer to live rather than to die.

"Here, then, is my offer to you. Remain here, in this room, until Ivan Dolokof comes. You will tell him that I am away, and you will do so in a fashion which need not be too impertinent, for he observes the least shadow of impoliteness. Do I make myself clear?"

I lighted a cigarette slowly. Oh, yes, the third proposition was palpable enough. I was saved from disgrace—at a price. "I warn you that there is not much time for deliberation."

I writhed inwardly. It was not that I was afraid of this fire-eating Dolokof, whom I detested without having set eyes on him; but my stomach rose against

the childish folly of a duel. Heavens, into what a hole had I got myself! I answered, at length:

"I am to kill this man? That is your meaning?"

"You will provoke him to an encounter—yes."

"It does not follow that he will fall."

"Granted. Only if you do not kill him on the field he will most assuredly kill you."

"In the latter event you will be no better off."

"I take my chance of that."

"But this is intolerable. I have no quarrel—"

"You should have thought of that before you came here. You are at liberty to refuse; in which case you leave this house in custody. Bah, you are young, and your nerves are splendid. Then you know the use of a pistol?"

"A duelling pistol—no."

"So much the worse for you."

"You are sure of me, then?"

"If you do not accept, you are lost."

"You compel me to murder a man, or be murdered by him. It is monstrous!"

"So was your vile trick, Monsieur Tredgold."

At that instant we both heard a furious ringing of a bell. The Baron de Lionzac started violently, and the grey splashes re-appeared on his cheeks. He was a coward, and no mistake!

He said, in an altered tone: "I should not be surprised if that is Dolokof. Your answer!"

I looked him up and down. "You had better make yourself scarce, baron," I advised.

"We understand one another," said he, and went out.

To think that I was under the thumb of such a creature!

What was I going to do? I had no certain idea. Such a situation does not obtrude itself in a life very frequently. My first act, however, was to take the rope of pearls from the table where I had dropped it and to deposit it in my pocket. That was part of the bargain. I lighted another cigarette and crossed over to the fire. The baron must have given instructions, for at that instant the door of the room was opened and a

servant showed in a visitor. Was this the notorious Dolokof?

No. Here was no swaggerer—a well-dressed man of fair complexion, hair naturally curly; not broad across the shoulders, but of a lean, lithe make, decidedly handsome, and whose quiet eyes lighted up with a half-smile as he looked round the room, then bowed to me. His fur coat was unbuttoned, showing evening dress.

I returned his salutation. He continued to glance round the room, and at last said:

"Pardon me, monsieur, but I was informed that the Baron de Lionzac was here."

"Well, I certainly am not he," I smiled.

"Which is fortunate for you," he purred. "But possibly you can afford me some information concerning him?"

"You are not Monsieur Ivan Dolokof?"

"That is my name," said he haughtily.

So! I had not thought it possible. Was it a fact that I was this man's double? I looked at him curiously.

"My appearance interests you, monsieur?" he asked coldly.

I drew a deep breath.

"If you wait to see the baron you will grow old in the act," I answered, imitating his tone.

He looked at me, and he was still as a statue. "Is the impertinence in that message his, or your own?" said he easily.

"Fix it where you choose."

He laughed perfectly naturally. Then he crossed over to the window and stood drumming his fingers upon a pane. He came back at last, drawing off his left glove. I watched him carefully. A curious alteration had passed into his face, which was as dispassionate, as emotionless, as that of the dead.

"*Ciel*, there are harder riddles to read," said he, regarding me between half-shut lids. "Our brave friend the Baron de Lionzac does not deserve so excellent a protector as yourself, monsieur."

I smoked in silence.

"Or did he pay you well?" he added. Still I said nothing.

"But if you take my advice," cried Dolokof in a harsh, rising tone, "you will step aside from between me and my enemy; since if you delay one second more than I like, it will be the worse for you."

"Monsieur Dolokof should put all that in one of his plays."

"You will permit me the freedom of your name?"

I handed him a card. "That is as I should wish," said he. "You will not deny that the Baron de Lionzac wished you to insult me?"

"I congratulate you on your perception."

"In which case there is no necessity for me to flick you across the face with my glove?"

"Not the slightest."

We bowed to one another, and he went out. That was all.

You will admit that it was enough.

At my hotel I found Armande Duverne waiting for me. With philosophical patience he endured my ungracious mood for twenty minutes, when there came a fellow in a long, dark-green overcoat that covered a tunic of the same color, who introduced himself as a lieutenant in Dolokof's old regiment of chasseurs.

"Pray do what is best," I said to Duverne. I went to find Pauline. She was leaving the theatre with the Berensteins. A whispered word and she forsook them for me. We went to the Café Maria Theresa for supper.

I told Pauline just what had happened. She listened with sparkling eyes, and cheeks that flushed and paled alternately. I never saw her look prettier. When I had finished she said:

"And is he really as handsome as people make out?"

I sulked for five minutes.

Suddenly Pauline's hand rested on mine. "What is putting you in such a bad temper, Derek?"

I choked. "You do not seem to grasp the gravity of this affair, Pauline. When he has killed me, and they have buried me—"

"Nonsense, Derek," she laughed. "These duels are not to be taken seriously. There will be a simple exchange of

shots, or you will be wounded, say, in—in the fleshy part of an arm—”

Just then Duverne joined us. He ordered a Grand Marnier *liqueur* and sat down at our table. “It is for the morning,” he whispered. “The sooner the better, I thought. That lieutenant—a most delightful fellow—suggests a quiet spot in the Prater where we shall not be interrupted.”

I glanced furtively at Pauline, who was sipping iced lemonade through a straw.

Duverne went on, gravely: “All this is very unpleasant for you, Derek. On the other hand, a necklace of pearls worth forty thousand dollars is worth fighting for.” He lowered his voice still more as he added: “Your duty is plain, of course. Dolokof is aware that the Baron de Lionzac wishes you to do for him. That may not be your intention, but Dolokof believes it to be so. Consequently he will take no risk but will aim to kill. Your one chance, therefore, is to do the same—”

Pauline uttered a little scream. She had knocked over her glass of iced lemonade.

First I recall a surgeon kneeling on the wet grass. From a flat case of shining mahogany he extracted an instrument, held it up to the light, replaced it with care, got up—wiping his knees.

Then there was Armande Duverne in a frock-coat, chatting with the lieutenant of chasseurs, who wore knee boots and a flat fur cap. I heard Duverne say to him: “You were quite right yesterday evening, m’sieur, regarding the first line of the third verse of the second of my ‘Sonnets of Illyria.’ There is indeed a slight error in the meter....” I wondered at Duverne, and for a second or two watched him loading my pistol—charging it from the barrel end, the muzzle, as they still do with duelling pistols.

Then there was Ivan Dolokof, walking up and down by himself, looking at the ground, taking small notice of anybody.

Suddenly I felt something pushed into my hand. It was my weapon, the handle

of rosewood, inlaid. I heard Duverne urge: “Remember, *mon cher!* He means business. We cannot afford to lose you. Bring your arm down as you turn and aim on a level with his thigh.”

They measured off eleven paces. We were stationed facing opposite directions—that is, with our backs towards one another.

A voice, clear as a rifle shot, called out: “Are you ready, gentlemen?”

Silently I cursed the Baron de Lionzac.

“One....”

I extended my right arm straight above my head.

“Two....”

I thought of Pauline.

“Three!”

I whirled about, dropping my arm and firing at Dolokof almost before I glimpsed him. A splutter of dirt shot up from the ground into my face. Two startled crows flew away with mocking cries. The surgeon and the lieutenant of chasseurs sprang towards Dolokof.

Duverne was shaking the wits into me and exclaiming, “By the great devil, you have done for him!”

He rushed me back to the hotel. He meant to get me out of the country without the loss of a second of time. Pauline was waiting. Duverne brushed her aside. Her face flamed, yet she insisted: “Derek, you—you have hurt him?”

“There’s a bullet in him,” cut in Duverne savagely.

Pauline burst into tears.

I sold the necklace of pearls in New York on the day when I heard that Ivan Dolokof was out of danger.

I do not know if the Baron de Lionzac would have kept my secret in accordance with the terms of our compact; but it was with considerable relief that I learned of his death, two months after this adventure, consequent upon a paralytic attack. Gabrielle was free.

She has not married Dolokof yet.

“But she will,” Pauline affirms. “And they will settle down and become quite ordinary people, living ordinary lives. Which would never suit us, Derek?”

I cannot answer that question.

The Honor of The Family

A new story by the author of
"His House in Order."



By MINNIE
BARBOUR ADAMS

N then what did your pa say?" came in an awed chorus from the other boys.

Tim Moran, well knowing the dramatic possibilities of suspense, frowned and painstakingly flicked a bit of dust from his new shoes with his handkerchief.

"Go back with that ice and come up the walk, and don't you ever cut across the lawn with it again!" my dad said, chewin' his pipe. He's gettin' pretty mad when he does that. An' the iceman said, 'Go 'long! I'm nearly across now.' 'Get back there!' yelled my dad, jumpin' off of the porch; 'you don't run over me the way you do the rest of the neighbors!'"

"'N' what'd the iceman do?" piped Dobner Moore, excitedly.

"Dropt the ice an' spit on his hands."

An ecstatic sigh rustled about the circle.

"'N' 'en my dad shook his fist in the iceman's face, an' his muscle bulged under his shirtsleeves. 'Oh! you want to fight, do you?' he said to the iceman, 'n' the iceman said, 'You can't cuss me, Pat Moran, even if you are boss of the pre-sink!' an' my dad said, 'You little shrimp, I'd break every bone in your body at the first wallop; but I'll give you your chanct. Pick up that there ice and get out while there is yet time!' An' he did, slow an' swallowin' hard an' eyein' my dad as though he'd like to bite him in two"

"An' he went back with the ice an' come up the walk." There was amazed finality in Rudie Ehlers' tone. The

circle, that had been scarcely five feet—and seven heads—in circumference, slowly widened as the boys sat erect again.

"He comes 'cross our lawn, too, sometimes, an' it make ma awful mad," Gates Leedham admitted reluctantly.

"I'll tell my dad to speak to him about it," Tim offered pompously.

"Oh, go 'long! I guess my father's just as big an' strong as yours, Tim Moran!"

"Stronger," corrected Dobner Moore. "You ought to have seen him the day Doc Fischer run over Root's dog."

"What 'd he do?" encouraged the circle, swaying toward the speaker—all but Gates, who, with well-simulated indifference, began untangling a snarl of fishcord from his pocket.

"Annabel was jumping up and down and screaming awful," Dobner explained, "an' Gates' father thought it was the baby, an' run to the car where Doc was tryin' to get the dog out, an' raised it a foot off of the ground."

"An' the dog wasn't killed," supplemented one.

"Just a broken leg, an' Doc set it for Annabel," added another. They all knew the story by heart. Gates industriously chewed a knot in the line.

"My father aint so strong," Louis Fay began deprecatingly; "but once, up at Elk river—"

"My father was in the battle of Gettysburg," interrupted John Loring, solemnly. "He got two fingers shot off, an' he's got shot in his leg that aches him awful when it rains."

"We've seen 'em!" chorused the listeners; then:

"Where you going, Mannie?" added one as Manfred Dean, a slight, fair-haired boy rose suddenly from the circle.

"I guess my mother's calling me," he explained. "No! I can't go swimmin' this afternoon; got to take a darn music lesson. Well, so long, boys! See you later."

He walked away slowly, reluctantly, for he felt sure he—or, rather, his father would be the topic of conversation the moment he was out of hearing. He ought to have stayed. They all knew his mother hadn't called him, for she had passed them awhile back on her way uptown; but he just couldn't sit there another minute with them all bragging about what their fathers had done, and he not able to say a word.

Oh! why wasn't his father like the rest of them? he thought, miserably. Why had he been given a father that never hunted, or fished, played ball, or wrestled, and was afraid to say, "Boo!" to a cat?

They didn't have anything on him, though, when it came to mothers. She was the littlest of all of them, but she had once chloroformed a cat; she wasn't afraid of cows; and the way she could pick a ball out of the air was a caution. If only father had half the gumption she had, he wouldn't be so shamed that sometimes he 'most wished he was dead.

At supper he was so grave and preoccupied that his mother glanced at him anxiously. "You haven't had any trouble, have you, Manfred?" she asked, noting that his eyes rested oftener on his father than on his plate.

"No'm. Father, you suffered excruciatingly with that boil on your hip, didn't you?" he questioned hopefully.

"Why no—yes, I did; though I worked through it all, I remember."

"Then your life wasn't despaired of, or you didn't have to have a consultation, or anything?"

"No! Why, Manfred—"

"Did it leave a scar?" the boy interrupted desperately.

"Yes."

"Can I show it to the boys some time?"

"See here, son!" Mr. Dean laid down his knife and fork and regarded the boy with pretended severity. "I might be prevailed upon to bare my person in the interests of science; but to the gaze of the coldly critical rabble—no!" And he attacked his supper fiercely.

"The scar is almost gone anyway, Mannie," Mrs. Dean consoled laughingly; "but you might show them the one on his head made by a shinny club."

"Where? Who did it? Oh! why didn't you tell me before?" the boy demanded excitedly, hurrying around the table to his father's side.

He had done something, after all, he thought delightedly. Of course, it wasn't just what he would have wished for, but he'd show it to the boys—ah! here it was, a ragged scar, buried deep in the thick black hair. But what was this his father was saying?

"I was crossing the end of the campus, my eyes on the algebra in my hands, when that big Tom Sloane—you remember him, Marjorie—let fly with his club, and I got it. Of course, he didn't mean to—"

Manfred heard no more. He sadly laid the thick black hair over the inglorious wound, much as he would have covered his dead.

He was still brooding over his shame when they went out onto the porch after supper. Mr. Leedham and Gates strolled over, and soon the two men were engaged in a rather heated discussion over the placing of the new electroliers, the ornamental posts for which were already lying along the curb. Others dropped in till there were a half dozen men and as many boys.

Ordinarily, Manfred would have been delighted to do the honors of the occasion. He would have shown them the new trick he had taught Bismarck, and taken them to see Matilda Ann's new kittens that he had found in the woodshed only that morning; instead, he sat gloomily on the steps, tossing his ball, which, at length, he awkwardly missed

catching and saw roll down the walk and disappear beneath one of the iron posts.

"Can't reach it!" Gates announced from the curb.

"I'll get it," Rudie remarked confidently; but neither he nor Manfred could reach the little niche into which it had rolled.

"What is it, boys?" Mr. Dean asked kindly, coming across to them.

"My ball!" Manfred whispered tensely, drawing him a little apart from the others. "Oh father! can't you lift the post? I'll help awful hard, though I won't let on. Please, father?"

Mr. Dean glanced down in surprise at his son's pleading eyes and quivering lips, then at the ponderous length of iron at his feet, and shook his head. "What do you take me for, son! a steam derrick?" he asked, loud enough for all the boys to hear.

"Please, father?" urged his son, under his breath. "It aint very heavy up at this end, an'—an' I'll rub liniment on your back to-night if it strains it."

Tim Moran, swaggering past, heard a little, saw all, and understood. "I'll tell my dad to get it as he goes by to-morrow morning," he observed condescendingly.

"The men will set the post in a few days, Manfred," Mr. Dean consoled, plainly puzzled by the boy's actions; "but if you can't wait—" His hand sought his pocket.

"No! No!" the boy cried fiercely; and whirled around to see Mr. Leedham, triumphantly towed by Gates, approaching.

"I tell you, Armstrong," he was saying earnestly, tapping his broad palm with his forefinger, "we're always going to be sorry if we let them— Where? Oh!—trick us into"—he stooped and abstractedly lifted the post—"having them set inside the parking. Got it? All right. Now, as I was saying—"

Manfred slipped away into the darkness, sick with disappointment and shame. He might as well give up trying to make anything out of his father, he thought disconsolately. He wished to gracious they hadn't moved from DeWitt to this horrid old town; though, until lately he had thought it the bulkiest thing that had ever happened to him. In

DeWitt, though, a father had been a father, nothing more; while here—at least on Fourth street—he was a sort of hero whose deeds of strength and prowess, whose bodily infirmities even, if they were gained in a glorious cause, were made much of.

Heretofore, he actually had been proud of his father, proud that he was so tall and slim, with the grandest way of lifting his hat. He didn't believe there was a father on Fourth street that could equal him in manners; but the boys had no way of knowing that and, of course, he couldn't tell them. He had the handsomest black eyes and the loveliest smile—

Manfred felt his heart warm toward him in spite of everything when he thought of that smile. And he had been to Harvard. The lad had sprung that fact proudly almost the first thing, but had found that education did not cut much of a figure among the boys. There was nothing else he could tell them. He had never had a fight; he'd never shot anything; he'd never done a daring deed; he'd never even sassed anyone that he knew of.

Oh! it was awful, having such a father. The boys had twitted him with it lots of times when they were mad at him, and he'd had lots of fights over it.

He slipped onto the porch, unseen, and threw himself down in a corner made dark by the vines. Bismarck, the big, awkward Newfoundland puppy, tumbled down beside him and whined pitifully when the boy was shaken suddenly by fiercely hushed sobs.

"Good old Bizzy!" he heard his mother say, a long time after.

"Watching over him, were you, old boy?" his father added, and he was lifted gently and carried into the house. At the foot of the stairs his manhood conquered sleep, and he wriggled from his father's arms.

"I'm—I'm awake now," he stammered hurriedly. "Anyway, you aint strong enough to carry me." Remembrance had come back and the old futile pain was on the job again.

"Manfred!" His father's voice was serious as he sat down beside him on the bed. "Manfred, something is bothering

you! Hadn't you better tell father what it is?"

"Land! no; I wouldn't be as mean as that!" the boy declared quickly.

"Is it anything you have done; something you are sorry for, maybe?"

"I am sorry for it, but it aint nothin' I'm to blame for." The tone was so hopeless that the father's and the mother's eyes met worriedly.

"He hasn't been himself for a month, and just see how thin he is getting," she said in a low tone.

"I have noticed that their games are more strenuous here than in DeWitt," the father ventured.

"But that doesn't account for that expression in his eyes, nor those dark circles under them."

Mr. Dean nodded slowly, and his voice was troubled as he asked:

"Then you can't tell me, son?"

The boy shook his head vehemently.

They urged no more. The Deans had their own ideas about raising a boy.

"There is help for you, Mannie!" Mrs. Dean whispered, as she kissed him good night. "Have you asked for it?"

"Oh, yes!" The boyish voice was very weary. "But there aint no use. It's too late to do anything now. He ought to have begun long ago."

Manfred unexpectedly found relief from a part of his trouble by going to school another way. By slipping out through the alley and dodging across a vacant lot, he came to a street of small houses, many children, and no fathers—that is, obtrusive fathers.

In the whole month that he sneaked to and from school with them, and joined in their hilarious fun at recess—if he could escape from his own gang—their progenitors were not once mentioned, a strange reticence it seemed to him; then he learned that Mike Flanagan's father had lost his eye while arresting a desperate character, and the wooden leg the elder Murphy wore had been valiantly earned in the fire that had wiped out the Gage block, years before.

If only— But, there! he must bear his trouble bravely—and he did, till one morning in May.

They were at breakfast, a late breakfast, as Mr. Dean had a cold and was

not going to the bank that day, when they heard fumbling fingers at the screen door and low, sobbing breaths that seemed to electrify Mrs. Dean out of her chair.

"Grandmother Morse!" she said with conviction; and ran into the hall, followed by the others.

"He's—he's whipping her again!" gasped the little old woman on the porch. "He's— Oh Nellie, Nellie!" She would have fallen if Mrs. Dean had not caught her.

"There, there!" she consoled, smoothing the white hair. "Mr. Dean'll stop it, dear! He'll put that man where he can't do it again!"

Even while excitedly snatching his cap from the hall tree, Manfred groaned over his mother's assurance. His father tackle the Italian who had bought Grandmother Morse's horse, Nellie? His father do anything more than look on with his hands in his pockets?

Guided by the sound of blows, Manfred and his father ran across the lawn to a side street. The horse, attached to a light wagon loaded with bananas, lay groaning in the road; and a thick-necked, red-faced Italian was whipping her and trying to drag her to her feet. Two or three women were calling to him shrilly to stop, and the boys—the hero-worshipping boys of Fourth street—were stopping on their way to school. Not a man was in sight, except Mr. Dean, who, in dressing gown and bandaged throat, hurried confidently to the man—to brute and beast. Manfred felt a sickening qualm. What could his father do that the women were not already doing?

"What's your Pa going to do?" Gates asked curiously. Mr. Dean had been untying the cord about his waist as he ran, and now threw the garment on the ground.

"Stop that! Don't strike her again!" he said in a low voice, seizing the Italian by the shoulder.

Manfred felt rather than saw the pitying glances of the boys. They felt, as did he, the futility of such a tone with a man as crazily angry as was Beninato. Even the man, himself, must have felt it.

"Let me be!" he snarled. "This my

horse!" And, wrenching himself free from the hand gripping his shoulder, he struck the horse a terrific blow across the head.

Mr. Dean seemed to gather himself up in a most unaccountable manner; his fist shot through the air and he landed a terrible blow on the Italian's jaw. The man went down with a snarl of rage, his hand in his pocket as he fell. Mr. Dean's disappointed gesture indicated, plainly, that the blow had somehow failed.

In an instant the Italian was up again, cursing horribly. Mr. Dean backed away, and a murmur went up from the boys, to be quickly hushed when they realized that it was a feint to draw his antagonist onto firmer ground.

"He's got a knife!" warned Mrs. Dean. Her husband nodded, but did not take his eyes from the advancing man—huge, brutish, lumbering like an infuriated bear. Suddenly he sprang, and Mr. Dean met him half way. There was an instant's struggle; then the Italian's arm, knife in hand, began slowly to be forced backward.

Not a word was said. The Italian had ceased to curse, and there was no sound but the heavy breathing of the two men. Higher and farther back went the big hairy hand clutching the knife. Manfred could see his father's face, white, set, wary. He heard a wheezing sound beside him and glanced up to see the policeman watching the fight, but making no move to interfere; instead, with arms folded and feet wide apart, his chin thrust out, he seemed to be enjoying it.

"You break-a my arm!" suddenly screamed the Italian, and fell in a groaning, whimpering heap.

"Oh, my dear! how did he do it?" demanded Mrs. Leedham hysterically.

"Science," Mrs. Dean returned proudly. "Jiu-jitsu was all the rage when he was at Harvard, and he became very proficient at it." Manfred heard and, feeling stunned and bewildered, turned toward his father.

"That was the prettiest bit of work I ever saw, Mr. Dean," the policeman was

saying. "There isn't a man on the force that'll dare tackle you after this, unless it would be to have you show 'em how," he supplemented, laughing.

"I'm a little out of training, I find," Mr. Dean deprecated; "but I used to handle with ease such men as Leedham and Moran," he added as Tim rushed up, demanding excitedly what it was all about.

"I believe it!" the policeman agreed admiringly as he jerked the Italian to his feet and led him away. Mr. Dean turned to Grandmother Morse, who was on her knees, stroking Nellie's head.

"Oh, I shouldn't 'a' sold you to him; but I didn't know—I didn't know!" she moaned pitifully.

Mr. Dean raised her gently. Even in the excitement of the moment, Manfred noticed proudly how beautifully he did it.

"She isn't hurt seriously, Mrs. Morse," he consoled. "And he shall not have her again. We'll put her in the lot back of the house until we can see what is to be done."

The last bell was sending out its urgent call, but not a boy stirred. They did not come very close to him, Manfred noticed. All their mouths were slightly open, and there was an awed respect in the glances bent upon him. He stood very straight; head up, hands deep in his pockets, and in his heart a great, glowing happiness that choked him.

"Gee, that was great!" Gates muttered, at length. "I didn't s'pose—he's so thin, you know—"

Manfred's chin went a trifle higher. "You don't have to weigh two hundred pounds to be a scientist," he remarked casually; and, picking up his books from where he had thrown them, he went proudly the length of Fourth street to school.

One or two of the boys silently kept step beside him, but the rank and file straggled behind, regaling less favored ones with the story of the fight—his fight.



The MAN WHO LOOKED LIKE LINCOLN

By FREEMAN TILDEN

Author of "The Yes-Man," "When He Came Home," "Black Eyes," etc.

I L L U S T R A T E D B Y H E R B R O T H

THE most notable figure in the village and township of Middlemount was Colonel Asahel Stone. He owed his prominence not to any meritorious act he had ever performed, or to any remarkable mental powers he had ever displayed, but to a trick of Nature, which had caused him to resemble, in face and figure, a man whose acts were meritorious and whose mental powers were remarkable. He looked like Lincoln.

Several years ago, the railroad ran an excursion from Middlemount and adjoining towns to Washington. Fare, including hotel accommodations and all necessary expenses, \$21.88. That is, you would incur no other expenses if you avoided eating *en route* and stayed in your room at the hotel until the train left for home. Several Middlemount townspeople took the trip. One of them was Colonel Stone.

There was an impulsive President in the White House then, who kept no tooth secret and left no hand unshaken. He shook every right hand that came from Middlemount, White Falls, Shadewell, New Paris, Hartwell, Four Cor-

ners, and Belgrade. He shook Colonel Stone's hand twice, and added that he was delighted. "I never saw a man who looked so much like Lincoln," he dentialgualated. Then he repeated that he was delighted, and presented Colonel Stone, after warning him that underpopulation is the curse of a nation, with an autographed photograph inscribed, "To my friend, Colonel Stone—who looks like Lincoln."

Colonel Stone was a bachelor, so he felt that the remark concerning underpopulation had no special reference to him; but he put the photograph in his pocket, and went back to Middlemount a man of fame. Indeed, his fame had preceded him. The newspapers got hold of the incident; it was reprinted under the caption, "A Fellow Townsman Honored," in the Middlemount *Tribune*, and when the train stopped at the little red station in the hills, Colonel Stone stepped off into an "ovation." The Box Factory Band, seven pieces, played "Hail the Conquering Hero Comes" and "He's a Jolly Good Fellow."

Colonel Stone made a speech. He thanked everybody from the bottom of

his heart. If he looked like Lincoln, and if the President of the United States had been so good as to comment on that likeness, he was glad. He was glad not so much for himself as for his native town, and his fellow citizens. He again thanked his friends who had got up this little surprise. He hoped he would be worthy of their esteem. The band now played "God Be With You Till We Meet Again," and the crowd dispersed, while Colonel Stone, placing his stovepipe hat more firmly upon his brow, was escorted home by a committee of three.

It was no surprise to Colonel Stone to learn that he resembled the beloved President of the sixties. He had cultivated the likeness assiduously. He had likewise cultivated that part of local popular opinion which had agreed upon the resemblance. It must be confessed that if the mirror in Colonel Stone's parlor had been gifted with speech, it could have told of the many minutes which its owner had spent before it. If a dictaphone had been installed in Colonel Stone's bedroom, it would have reproduced Colonel Stone's conception of the Gettysburg Address several times over. And it was known by most persons that Colonel Stone, who was bowling along toward seventy years, had been dyeing his whiskers from time out of mind—Lincoln with a white beard being inconceivable.

Yes, the town had long since agreed that Colonel Stone looked like Lincoln. But now the likeness had the sanction of the President. Colonel Stone was now no longer a citizen of Middlemount. He was the property of the nation. His photograph was in demand. Barnes, the photographer, made a handsome thing from those negatives which had been so long dust-laden on the shelf.

Colonel Stone had never, within the memory of the present generation, been entirely solvent. He spent a small pension invariably three months in advance of its receipt. Perhaps his war experience had left him a fixed idea of the propriety of forage as a means of subsistence. At any rate, he lived off the country.

Once a year, when the grocer, and the butcher, and the small waresmen were

going over their uncollected accounts, they sighed as they came to the name of Colonel Stone, put a blue-pencil line through his obligations and charged it to profit and loss. They did this partly because the Colonel, with all his military stiffness, and with all his unconscious humbuggery, was a likable old fellow; but mostly because he looked so much like Lincoln—and because, too, they felt that a character like Colonel Stone has a certain advertising value to a town. People would drive into the village from miles around, and go home with a little halo of romance around their imaginations, from merely having been saluted by Colonel Stone as he stalked majestically down the main street.

In the hey-day of his glory, Colonel Stone took his new and increased honor with a military imperturbability. He could have breakfasted, dined, and supped away from home had he wished. But he was not too free with his presence. He economized himself. He saw that a little mystery was an asset, and at times immured himself. He was mentioned for public office—

The peaceful pre-eminence of Colonel Stone was suddenly and rudely interrupted.

A stranger came to Middlemount. He was an elderly man of military bearing, by name and brevet Major Flint. No, he was not entirely a stranger, either. He had been born on a farm in the town of Middlemount, had gone away when a young man, had fought in the Civil War, had gone to the Northwest after the great struggle; he had made a fortune in land, mines, farm mortgages, and what not, and now had returned, a widower without encumbrance, to spend his remaining days in the place of his boyhood. Some of the oldest inhabitants recalled him. He bought the old Eph Adams home in the village, hired a housekeeper and set up his establishment.

Major Flint was a man of impressive proportions, with a thundering voice that rumbled like an approaching storm when he tried to subdue it. He assisted his gait with a stout cane, or cudgel. He was said to have a formidable temper, and to be a man of terrible wrath when aroused. But a certain most striking

thing about him—the thing in which he himself took tremendous pride—was the object of immediate and excited comment. He was the living counterpart of General Grant.

It was evident from the very first that Major Flint intended to discourage no appreciations of his remarkable resemblance to the Union general. One of his first acts was the presentation of a large steel engraving of General Grant, to be hung on the wall of the town hall, where it might inspire the manhood of Middlemount, and incidentally, serve to remind them of Major Flint's likeness. He deliberately heightened the illusion by appearing always in public with a large black cigar in his mouth. But the finishing touch was an autographed photograph which he pulled from his pocket at every auspicious encounter. It was the photograph of a former President of the United States, and the words written upon it were: "To my friend, Major Flint—who looks like Grant." The handwriting was the same as that upon the treasured photograph in the possession of Colonel Stone.

The first meeting of Colonel Stone and Major Flint was classic. The encounter was brilliantly staged. It was early evening. Colonel Stone, accompanied by Lester Williams, was approaching Beals' Grocery and General Merchandise Emporium from the west. Major Flint, with James C. Harris, town auditor, was simultaneously approaching from the east. To the delight of a large number of idlers, the two military men met squarely before their eyes.

Mr. Harris said: "Major Flint, this is Colonel Stone."

Mr. Williams said: "Colonel Stone, this is Major Flint."

"My respects to you, sir," said Major Flint, saluting somewhat rigidly.

"I hope I see you well, sir," replied Colonel Stone.

This old-time formula uttered, the men passed. But the crowd on the steps of the grocery heard Colonel Stone remark, in a penetrating voice, "The likeness does not strike *me* as remarkable."

Almost at the same moment the rumbling tones of Major Flint were heard: "The nose is *positively unlike Lincoln's*. And Lincoln *had a wen*."

Colonel Stone heard Major Flint's remark. Major Flint heard Colonel Stone's disparagement. Neither man seemed to hear the other. But in their hearts a jealousy was fixed, a hatred planted; and

they knew that there could never be peace with honor, or even a truce without a stain.

The first actual skirmish of the feud was precipitated by the entertainment committee of Pomona Grange No. 363, of Middlemount. They had extended an invitation to Colonel Stone several months before to address

them at the annual festival on the "Life of Lincoln." Colonel Stone had accepted. After the advent of Major Flint, it occurred to the unfortunate committee that it would be an act of peculiar courtesy to ask the Major to attend, too, and address them on the "Life of Grant." Major Flint promptly accepted.

Colonel Stone, hearing of the second invitation, indignantly withdrew his acceptance. This was just what Major Flint desired. He attended the festival, had the platform all to himself, and filled the Grange Hall with his powerful voice. He referred, at one point in his address, to the autographed photograph he had received from the President, and added: "This photograph and the sig-



He was the living counterpart of General Grant

nature upon it are genuine, *unlike some other similar ones in circulation.*" That was all he said on the subject, but the insinuation was perfectly understood. When the words were carried to the Colonel, he was first stupefied with indignation, and later burst into a torrent of scarcely coherent language. From that moment the battle was on.

Inevitably the townspeople split upon the merit of the feud. Colonel Stone had his adherents; Major Flint had his. The opposing parties partook of the severity of their illustrious leaders—wrangled over the points of debate, and not infrequently came to blows, or were separated in the nick of time.

Major Flint had several weighty advantages over Colonel Stone. He was a wealthy man; and to his standard came most of those who incline toward that most pragmatic of modern arguments—money. Colonel Stone's bulwark was in the deep love and admiration that the name of Lincoln awakes in the average American. Grant was a mighty general to Middlemounters as to others; but the homely human virtues and little lovable humanities of Lincoln were close to their hearts. In other words, Major Flint re-

sembled a splendid military hero; but Colonel Stone looked like—Lincoln.

By the death of Millard Prendergast, the office of town clerk became vacant. To fill the place, a special town election was advertised. Almost immediately it was reported that Colonel Stone would be a candidate. It would have been hard to find a less suitable town clerk than the Colonel, whose disregard of the petty details of life was monumental, and whose desire for regular work of any kind had never been apparent. But as a palpable affront to Major Flint, the idea seemed good. Colonel Stone let it be understood that he would "run."

The challenge was promptly accepted by the Grant faction. Major Flint had only a vague conception of the duties of a town clerk, but the candidacy of Colonel Stone made it imperative that he too should run. And so the campaign was begun at once.

There followed a period of excitement which will be long remembered in Middlemount. All the paraphernalia of electioneering, all the plots, counterplots, subterfuges, passionate appeals, and disclaims of political warfare came into play. The Box Factory Band was in constant demand.

Transparencies bearing the names and claims of the opponents were lighted. Colonel Stone made a ringing speech concerning the palladium of our liberties from his front steps in the presence of a serenading gathering. Phoenix rose from the ashes on the front steps of Major Flint—Phoenix representing an untrammelled public



The first meeting of Colonel Stone and Major Flint was classic.

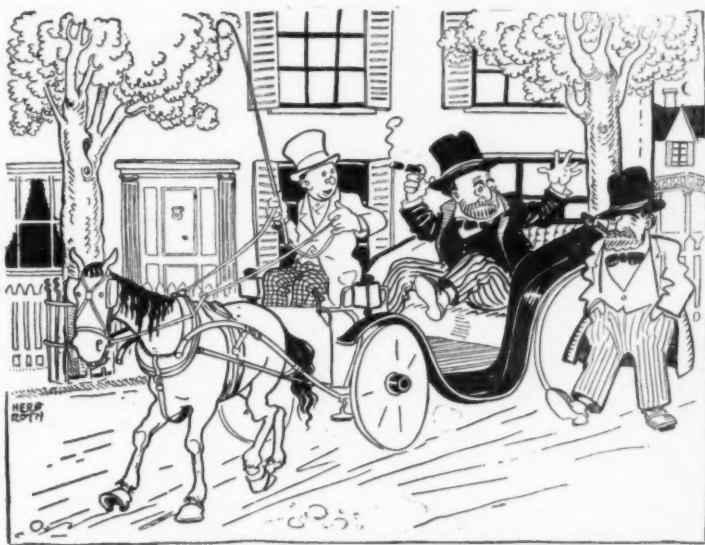
conscience, which it lay solely in the power of the Major to resurrect.

Major Flint gave the Woman's Club his check for \$100, and the assurance of his undying esteem for the opposite sex. Colonel Stone, whose donative capacity, for economic reasons, was more limited, gave his assurance of undying esteem, without any accompanying draft. Major

Flint offered to build, at his own expense, a suitable bandstand on the Common. Colonel Stone, again at disadvantage, could offer only his breast to the spears of his countrymen if his cause should be tinctured with any selfish ambition. The report was circulated that Colonel Stone enlisted only to escape the draft. A prompt denial of this slander was accompanied by an insinuation that Major Flint had left the western part of the country under a cloud.

To clear away some of the fog of these mysterious asseverations, a public debate was settled on, in which the Colonel and the Major should have the opportunity to present their cases in person. It was held on the Common, in the presence of the greatest audience which had ever assembled at Middlemount for any purpose. In spite of the fact that the people made so much noise that neither debater could be heard beyond the first few rows, the meeting was considered a great success; and perhaps it was, from one point of view. But from the viewpoint of the Trumbull Minstrels, a troupe which was to give a performance at the Town Hall that same evening, the success of the public debate was nothing less than murderous.

Trumbull's Minstrels had been barely eking out expenses for the last two weeks



The Major, seeing him, gave a hoarse cry.

of one-night stands. The twenty-one men and three women who comprised the talented organization had looked forward to recouping their waning fortunes in Middlemount, which was known as a good town for the drama. In fact, the manager staked his whole future on this performance. And thus, when the hour came for the curtain to rise and there were only twelve persons in the house, and those held free passes, the manager, who could hear the applause of the crowd out on the Common where the debaters were giving a too successful performance, called the troupe together and made a little speech of his own. The minstrels were insolvent—stranded in Middlemount.

Major Flint was sitting in the hotel office, surrounded by a congratulatory group, when the manager of Trumbull's Minstrels, followed by the dejected company, came in.

"No show, eh?" said the hotel clerk with a giggle.

"No; too much politics," replied the manager, affecting a light-hearted manner. Through this assumption of levity he counted on getting a night's lodging before the bankruptcy of the troupe was known.

Major Flint's attention was called to the company. "You and Colonel Stone

proved too much of an attraction to suit those fellows," said some one.

The Major laughed. Then he looked serious. Then he looked at the ceiling and whistled softly. He had caught the hopeless expression on the faces of the minstrels, and suddenly sensed the reason. It gave him an idea. He pondered on the idea a minute or two, and then walked over to the clerk. "Got a room for me?" he asked. "I think I'll stay here to-night."

The clerk had a room—the best in the house. The Major took the key, alleged a headache, and bade his friends good-night. But the Major did not go to bed. At half-past one next morning he was sitting in the room talking with the hotel clerk.

"Mind now," said the Major, "these show fellows don't know where the money's coming from."

"Certainly not, Major."

"And they leave town right after they've done their work."

"They'll be glad to, I guess."

"Well, then, don't forget my instructions. Here's part of the money. They get the rest when they've finished the job."

The clerk went out, and the Major sat thinking awhile. Suddenly he slapped his knee and burst into a hearty guffaw. "I'll show him up," he said. "*Him* look like Lincoln!"

Meanwhile the clerk was talking with the manager of Trumbull's Minstrels. "Can you do it?" he was asking.

"Can we do it? Can ducks swim!" replied the manager, confidently.

"I mean have you got the necessary—what do you call it?"

"Wardrobe, we call it."

"Yes, that's it."

"I should say we have. We've got one of the most expensive outfits that ever went on the road"—this with professional pride.

"Well then, the man who—the man I represent—wants you to be all ready at nine o'clock, when people are out on the streets. And don't bunch all together, he says. Spread around, and kind of make a sudden appearance. Understand?"

"Sure," said the manager. Then he asked: "But what's the idea, anyway?"

"You don't need to bother about that," answered the clerk. "You do as you're told, and you get the money."

At five minutes to nine the next morning, Major Flint was in the livery stable in the rear of the hotel. One of the men had just finished hitching up a horse to an old-fashioned barouche and was receiving instructions. "I want you to drive slowly up Main Street," said the Major, "as far as Colonel Stone's house, and then back again slowly." He looked at his watch. "All right," he said. "We're off." He climbed into the carriage, and the horse moved lazily out of the yard.

When they were on Main Street, the Major began to look around nervously. What he expected to see did not appear immediately. He began to twirl his watch-chain. Suddenly, however, he uttered a sigh of relief; a grin took possession of his mouth, and he leaned back luxuriously. For, from an alley-way between Beal's Grocery Store and the barber shop a tall figure, with a stovepipe hat and the familiar Lincoln visage, stepped forth, and walked along slowly.

At the same moment, from the opposite side another man, similarly clad, and looking remarkably like Lincoln—and hence like Colonel Stone—came into view.

The driver saw them. "What the dickens—?" he began.

"Mind your business—and drive slowly," ordered the Major.

Another Lincoln stepped out from behind one of the great elms that shaded the Main Street. Another Lincoln came down from behind one of the white pillars of the Town Hall. Looking up the Main Street, Major Flint's pleased eyes descried other figures with stovepipe hats walking slowly along.

Men, women, and children came running out of stores and houses. Some of them, seeing at first only the Lincoln nearest to them, said: "Good morning, Colonel," as the figure passed. Then, when they saw almost the exact counterpart approaching from the other side, they stopped, confused, and looked around, only to see more Lincolns coming from all directions.

Telephones began to ring. Beals, the grocer, called up his house. "Get the children ready and come right down to the store!" he shouted to his wife. "There's the greatest sight you ever saw! The village is as full of Lincolns as a nut is full of meat!—Yes, Lincolns!—

All the while, Major Flint was driving slowly up the street, drinking in his revenge with tears of suppressed laughter in his eyes. His scheme was working brilliantly. He was showing Middlemount how easily the Lincoln exterior could be imitated by inferior persons,

and in addition was raising a laugh at the Colonel from which that gentleman would never recover—at least politically.

At the Colonel's house the driver turned. Major Flint scanned the vicinity with alert eyes, striving to catch a glimpse of his rival. He was not in evidence. Perhaps the news had not yet reached him. The horse began to go back toward the hotel.

They were proceeding at a pace deliciously moderate, when a man with a black felt hat, walking along ahead of the carriage, started across the street. As he did so, he turned toward the Major. The Major, seeing him, gave a hoarse cry, started to rise, and then fell back limp in the



Grants mingled with Lincolns up and down the street.

Colonel Stones!—Whatever you call 'em!"

Children ran at the heels of the mock-Lincolns shouting and cat-calling. Windows were raised and faces appeared at them. There were cries of "Well, I declare!" "Did you ever!" "Which one is Colonel Stone?"

seat. His eyes were bulging with astonishment; his mouth was twitching with impotent rage. For the man who stood in the road facing him was, as nearly as might be, the counterpart of himself. He saw before him another General Grant.

The Major weakly signaled the driv-

er to go on. Another Grant came out from behind a tree. The Major looked down the street with horror. He saw a Grant shaking hands dramatically with a Lincoln; he saw another Grant standing in front of a house looking up at a window, undeniably flirting with a young woman. Another Grant was being violently attacked by a dog. Grants mingled with Lincolns up and down the street.

The Major recovered his voice. Standing up in the carriage, he thundered to the driver, "Quick! to the hotel!" He said more, but it was inelegant and unworthy of print. The driver laid the whip across the horse, and the carriage went rapidly along; yet not so rapidly but that the Major could see that Grants were as numerous as Lincolns.

The carriage drew up in front of the hotel. The clerk, pale, seized the arm of a man who stood beside him on the steps, cried "That's him," pointing to the Major, and fled indoors. The manager, ignorant of the exact cause of the clerk's terror, but convinced that something had gone wrong, ran up to the Major and hastened to explain, "I'm sorry, mister, we didn't have Lincoln make-ups enough to fill the bill, so we

made up ten Lincolns and ten Grants—"

At that moment, and not till then, he looked at the face of the enraged man before him.

"You—you—" he said, and then dodged the awful cudgel which Major Flint aimed at his head, and bolted for the hotel door and the sanctuary of his room.

Three days later Major Flint, who had been confined to his home by what the *Tribune* called "an indisposition," heard a hubbub outside, as of a group of men, women and children passing the house and speaking excitedly. He went to the window and cautiously peered out. Then he told the housekeeper she might as well find out where the people were going, and the cause of their unusual commotion.

The housekeeper soon returned.

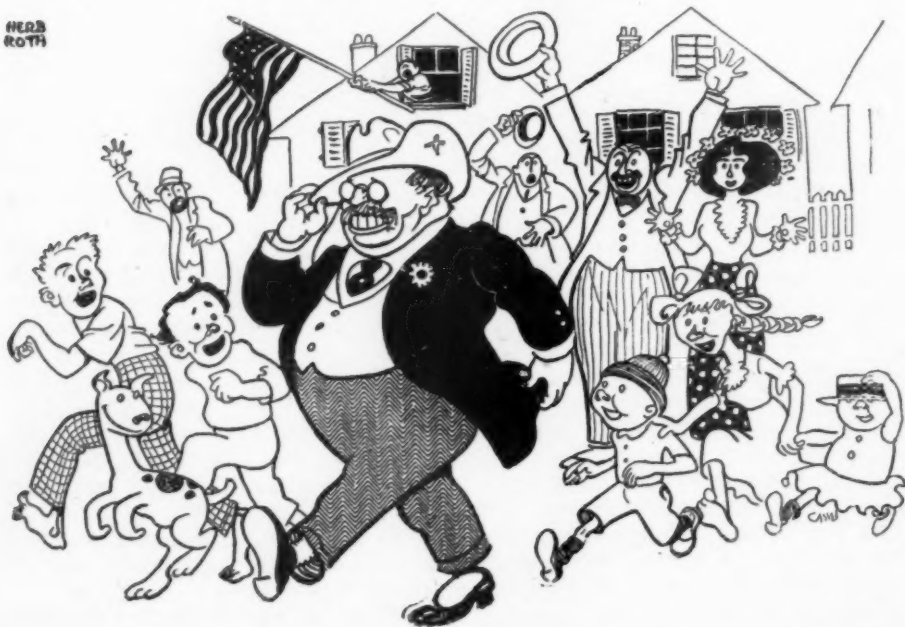
"Well, what's the row?" asked the Major.

"Everybody's going—everybody in town's going or gone—down to the hotel," replied the woman, breathing hard. "A—man came—yesterday—"

"Well!"—impatiently from the Major.

"A man—who looks just like Colonel Roosevelt!"

HERB
ROTH





With the season under way

By Louis V. De Foe

Photograph by White, New York.
Eugene O'Brien as *John Arnold*, and Frances Starr as *Dorothy*, in
"The Case of *Becky*."

LAST year it was "The Return Of Peter Grimm" and spiritualism; this season it is "The Case of *Becky*" and hypnotism. One play invoked a ghost from the mysterious vale of the dead; the other exorcises a she-devil from the material body of the living. Thus does Mr. David Belasco compel the occult world to pay tribute to his stages!

The uncanny fascination of the unseen

forces that rule *Becky* in the new play of dual personalities by Mr. Edward Locke, like the creepy mysteries which enveloped the returned spirit of old *Peter* in the drama that preceded it, will be a signal for much speculation and discussion. The question of mental suggestion is quite sure to be disputed as vigorously and also to as little purpose as the topic of the survival of personal

energy after death was a year ago. All such matters will have to be settled out of Mr. Belasco's court—which is the theatre.

But as to the play itself, I am confident that in no other production has Mr. Belasco displayed so much ingenuity as a stage manager or has he ever before attempted a theme which called for greater daring. *Becky's* case is the old case of *Dr. Jekyll* and *Mr. Hyde* presented in the light of the baffling science of hypnotism. It is a story of two distinct personalities—one good, gentle, generous and lovable, the other wicked, artful, treacherous and malevolent—in conflict for the possession of the human being they inhabit. Nor is this all. Parallel with the grim struggle runs another between a charlatan who practices mesmerism for evil ends and a scientist who employs hypnotism for humanity's good. The weapons they wield are the same invisible, intangible forces.

The grip which "The Case Of Becky" is sure to obtain upon all who see the play comes largely from the fact that no one is able absolutely to deny its truth or argue that what befalls its characters may not be a part of the unexplainable experiences of actual life. Call it the figment of a nightmare and the retort will be ready that it is based directly on Dr. Morton Prince's generally accepted record of scientific investigation, "The Dissociation Of A Personality." In this interesting work the eminent Boston neurologist relates how he discovered not only two but four distinct and widely dissimilar personalities in a young woman under his observation, and how he succeeded in restoring her to normal condition by hypnotic suggestion.

Dorothy, in Mr. Locke's play, is just such a creature as Dr. Prince describes, except that her affliction is not so complicated. She is a patient in the sanitarium of *Doctor Emerson*, a famous hypnotist and specialist in nervous disorders. Her case has been placed under his care by the mother of young *John Arnold*, to whom she is betrothed, but whom she hesitates to marry because of her mysterious and uncontrollable vagaries. Normally she is winning, gracious and lovable, but at intervals a demon takes complete possession of her. Then

she becomes a creature of incarnate evil, knowing herself only as *Becky* and hating her other personality, whom she seeks in every way to injure. If, as *Dorothy*, this victim of irresistible obsession is very, very good, she becomes, as *Becky*, like the little girl with the curl in the fable, much worse than awful.

It is as *Dorothy* that you are first made acquainted with this victim of dual personalities. With sparkling eyes, the glow of health upon her cheeks, and laughter ringing, she comes bounding into *Doctor Emerson's* consulting room to relate how, a short time before, she had awakened to find herself perched high up in an apple tree. These inconsistencies of conduct seem so ridiculous to her. She has no memory of what has happened during her lapse from her natural self. Presently she goes to her room to arrange some flowers; and the discussion of her case, which her intrusion has interrupted, is resumed by the scientist and *Dr. Peters*, his assistant.

Doctor Emerson has failed to obtain from *Dorothy* any revelation of her past life. On this subject the girl is strangely reticent. But he is firm in the belief that her peculiar state is due to a nervous shock suffered in her childhood or to some cruel pre-natal influence. He has decided to permit the malevolent side of her nature to develop until his opportunity arrives to banish it forever by the power of hypnotism.

The arrival of a traveling mesmerist who calls himself *Professor Balzamo* not only lets in a light upon *Dorothy's* past, but lifts the veil from a tragedy in the kindly scientist's domestic life. This vulgar, bumptious charlatan, who pretends at first to be making a professional call, finally admits the real purpose of his visit. He asserts that *Dorothy* is his daughter and declares his intention of taking her away with him. He is ready to supply proofs of his claim, but *Doctor Emerson* refuses to surrender the girl. Something in *Professor Balzamo's* appearance and manner has led him to suspect that his visitor is a miscreant named *Schwartz*, who, twenty years before, lured away his wife and left her to die in misery and alone. He feels that he has at last found the man who has ruined his home. To throw *Balzamo* off his

Frances Starr in "The Case of Becky"—in the center as *Dorothy*, at either side as *Becky*, *Dorothy's* evil alter ego.

Photographs by White, New York



guard and gain time to perfect his plans, the scientist invites him to be his guest at dinner that evening.

Meanwhile *Dorothy*, although she has been told nothing of *Professor Balzamo's* visit, has felt his evil presence. A scream is heard from the floor above, and down the bannister comes sliding the demoniacal creature who knows herself as *Becky*. With graphic touches the malicious side of the girl's nature is now portrayed. Nothing about her suggests the winning, amiable girl of a few moments before. She has become a treacherous, vindictive fiend, filled with hatred for everyone around her and bent upon injuring *Dorothy*, whom she imagines to be a different person from herself. Struggling, and in a paroxysm of rage, she is finally carried off to her room, to be kept in restraint until she returns to her normal self.

The remarkable virtuosity of Frances Starr's acting in this dual character throws into vivid contrast the *Jekyll* and *Hyde* attributes of *Dorothy* and *Becky*. It not only lends to the play much of its weird fascination but envelopes it in an atmosphere of strange reality. At length there comes a scene in which the victim's transition from her good to her evil nature takes place in the audience's view. *Dorothy* is seated in *Doctor Emerson's* brilliantly lighted office, engrossed in a book. Presently she grows restless and impatiently casts it aside. She is unable to concentrate her thoughts. She attempts to compose herself but her agitation grows. She seems to be struggling against an influence which she is powerless to resist. The lines of her face begin to harden. The mild light goes out of her eyes and in its place comes a vacant, lack-luster stare. Her body grows rigid; and then, as she springs from her chair with sudden, newly found strength, the evil forces of her nature gain ascendancy over the good. It is no longer *Dorothy* you behold, but *Becky*—a transformed creature in every minute detail of her being.

In this state of malevolent frenzy *Becky* is finally conquered by *Doctor Emerson's* power of hypnotic suggestion. But first, prompted by his questions, she discloses her childhood life. For years she traveled with *Professor Balzamo* as the subject of his mesmeric experiments. She at length began to realize and fear the growth of his influence over her. Finally, when she found herself one day in a normal state, she ran away to escape from the shackles of his malignant will.

Meanwhile *Becky* has been cunningly evading *Doctor Emerson's* efforts to place her under hypnotic control. It is only when she is convulsed with terror at the mention of *Professor Balzamo's* name that she inadvertently permits her eyes to meet the scientist's steady gaze. At his stern command the hand she has raised threateningly against him drops listlessly to her side. Unresisting, she is led to a chair. *Becky* is now deep in her hypnotic sleep.

But the evil genius will not suffer banishment without a struggle for its life. *Becky* vainly pleads for the existence which, she protests, it is her right to

enjoy. Her resistance, though, grows feebler, and at length she is silent. The sleeping girl is presently roused, and now she is no longer *Becky* but *Dorothy*, bewildered yet in her normal state.

Doctor Emerson's triumph over *Professor Balzamo* is reserved for the final act, which takes place in the laboratory of the sanitarium. This scene, with its elaborate equipment of intricate electrical instruments and strange mechanical devices which invoke an atmosphere of scientific experiment and research, is one of the most effective in its realism that Mr. Belasco has ever achieved.

The mesmerist, his faculties dulled by over-indulgence at his host's dinner table, is enticed to the laboratory by *Doctor Emerson*, who pretends to want to show him the latest scientific appliances of his profession. *Balzamo*, boastful and cocksure, filled with confidence in his own superior hypnotic power, scoffs at the scientist's suggestion that he cannot resist the influence of a blinding mechanical contrivance to induce hypnosis by artificial means. He accepts his host's invitation to make the attempt, and fails. The whirling, glittering machine overcomes him; and then, at *Doctor Emerson's* command, he discloses in his sleep what the audience already suspects—that *Dorothy* is not his daughter, but *Emerson's*, born after her mother had been lured to ruin. The penalty he pays is the scientist's revenge, for by the same power of suggestion which exorcised *Becky* from *Dorothy's* being, the miscreant, robbed forever of the gifts he abused, is awakened and driven from the place.

So much of the play's effectiveness depends upon the nicety of the performance of its characters that only an imperfect idea of its gripping power can be gained from a description of the bolder details of its story. While much of its illusion of reality proceeds from Miss Starr's acting in its dual leading character, the rôles of *Doctor Emerson* and *Professor Balzamo*, as played by Mr. Albert Bruning and Mr. Charles Dalton, lend their share to the uncanny interest. Both performances are in a vein of absolute naturalism. There are several minor personages, but it is from the leading trio that Mr. Locke's story derives its strangely fascinating quality.



Photograph by White, New York.

Charles Dalton as *Professor Kalamazoo*, Albert Brunning as *Doctor Emerson*, Harry C. Browne as *Peters*, Frances Starr as *Dorothy* and Eugene O'Brien as *John Arnold* in *The Case of Becky*.



Photograph by White, New York.
George M. Cohan as "Broadway."
in "Broadway Jones."

IT has generally been found that the romances of elderly lovers do not hold much attraction for those who look to the theatre as their source of entertainment. If, perchance, it happens that the lover is inclined to corpulency, and the object of his adoration is only half his age, the difficulties encountered by the author and actors in their efforts to please are greatly increased.

So "The Attack," the last play by the French dramatist, M. Henri Bernstein, to reach this country, is not likely to meet with the same measure

of success
in its American version
that it enjoyed
when originally
presented in Paris as

"*L'Assaut*." This, too, in spite of the fact that so fine an actor as Mr. John Mason has cast his fortunes this season with its leading character. Single-handed, Mr. Mason is able to lead the forlornest of hopes, but in this instance he has the assistance of a new Swedish actress, Martha Hedman, who revealed herself on her first appearance in this country as a young woman of unusual artistic attainments and rare personal charm.

The play, which follows the usual Bernstein formula of mechanical melodrama culminating in a scene of much emotional intensity, traces the romantic and political fortunes of *Alexandre Merital*, a French statesman and reformer who has risen in the service of his country until even the presidency of the Republic seems within his grasp. He is facing an important election crisis when a sudden domestic problem confronts him. This grave and elderly widower has selected a beautiful girl, *Renée de Rould*, as the bride of his oldest son, but *Renée* has other longings. She is in love with *Merital* himself, and has already confided her secret to his daughter, who is her intimate friend.

Being confident that the man of fifty, even if he loved her, would never speak on his own account, the ingenuous little creature boldly makes the avowal of her affections.

Merital is amazed, flattered and not a little disconcerted. The scene in which he

attempts to show her that the disparity of age and the illusions of youth make such a thing impossible is handled with extreme cleverness. It also has an unexpected outcome, for, even after *Merital* explains bluntly to *Renée* that he does not love her, she redoubles her appeals with such

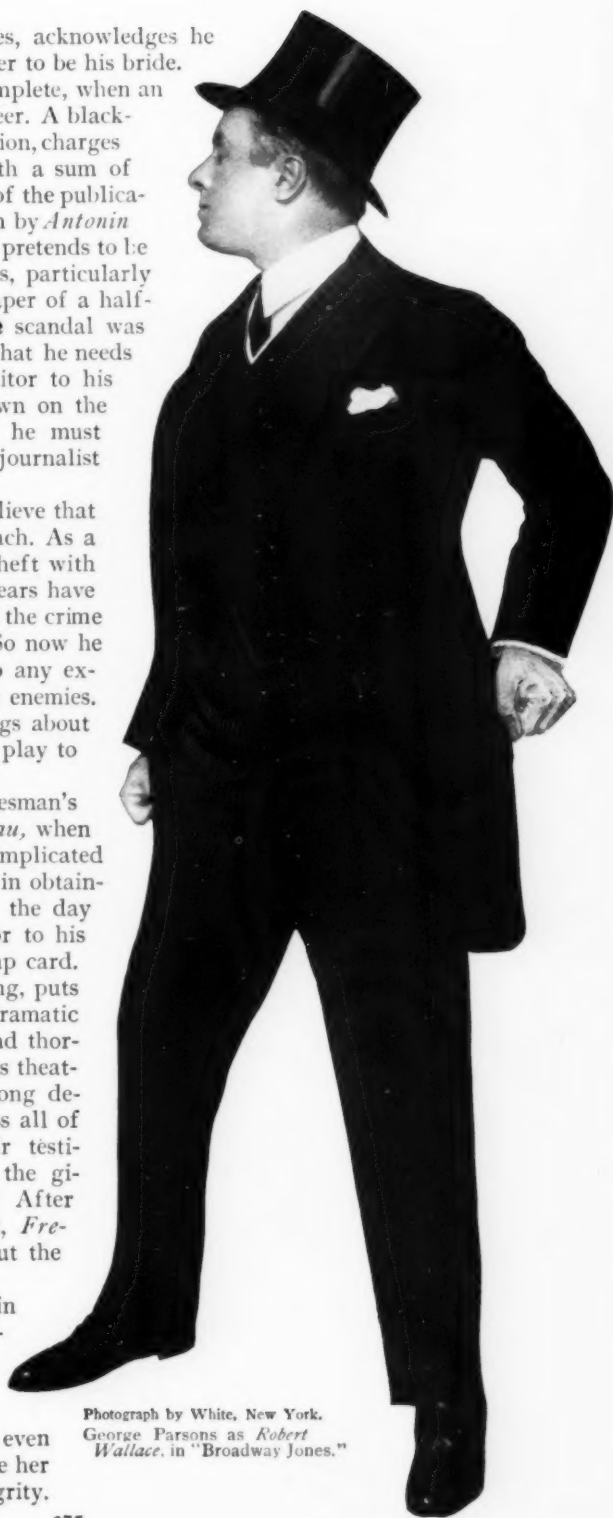
irresistible charm that he capitulates, acknowledges he has loved her all the time and asks her to be his bride.

Merital's happiness now seems complete, when an unexpected danger threatens his career. A black-mailing paper, on the eve of the election, charges him with having stolen in his youth a sum of money from his employer. The news of the publication of the scandal is brought to him by *Antonin Frepeau*, an editor in his party who pretends to be his friend. But certain circumstances, particularly the appearance in *Frepeau's* own paper of a half-hearted denial on the same day the scandal was made public, cause him to suspect that he needs not go far to discover the real traitor to his cause. Nevertheless *Merital* is thrown on the defensive. To save his reputation, he must bring suit against the blackmailing journalist who has defamed his name.

The audience has been made to believe that *Merital's* character is beyond reproach. As a matter of fact, he is guilty of the theft with which he is charged, but as thirty years have intervened he has ceased to fear that the crime would be brought up against him. So now he must go to any lengths or resort to any expedient to silence the attacks of his enemies. It is this supreme effort which brings about the dramatic episode that raises the play to its climax.

Certain documents in the statesman's possession convince him that *Frepeau*, when holding public office, was himself implicated in a huge swindle. *Merital* succeeds in obtaining corroborative evidence and, on the day before the trial, summons the editor to his house and prepares to play his trump card. The traitor, smiling and unsuspecting, puts in his appearance. Then follows a dramatic scene which is brilliantly written and thoroughly effective in spite of its obvious theatrical artifice. *Frepeau* puts up a strong defense, but is bluntly told that unless all of *Merital's* traducers withdraw their testimony and swear to his integrity, the gigantic swindle will be exposed. After holding out until the last moment, *Frepeau* wilts and consents to carry out the statesman's orders.

The trial, of course, results in *Merital's* complete vindication. Everyone, except the man who has escaped, is in high spirits. As for *Renée*, she quietly says she is not surprised, since nothing, not even proof of the accusation, would shake her faith in her lover's absolute integrity.



Photograph by White, New York.
George Parsons as Robert
Wallace, in "Broadway Jones."



Photograph by White, New York.
Helen F. Cohan as *Mrs. Spotswood*, George M. Cohan as *Jackson Jones*, and
Jerry J. Cohan as *Judge Spotswood*, in "*Broadway Jones*."

The young girl's confidence has the effect of completely disarming *Merital*, and abjectly he makes the admission to her that actually he was once a thief. Not even his self-conviction, however, will swerve her love.

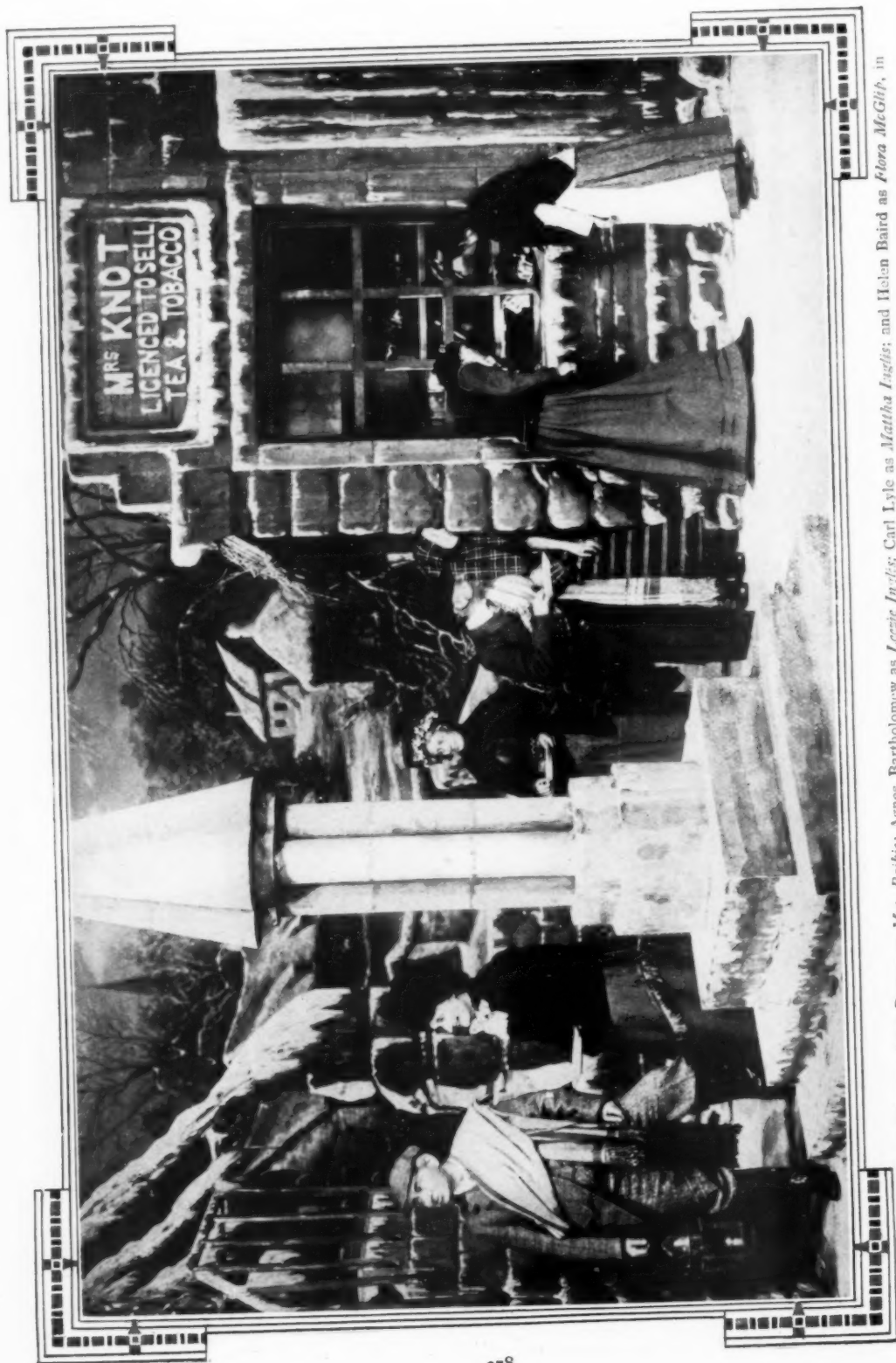
Most French dramatists carry the clash of conflicting forces to the very end of their plays, but Bernstein, in "*The Attack*," tries another expedient which is the more remarkable because it so nearly succeeds. The curtain rises again to give *Merital* an opportunity to tell the story of his wrong-doing to his bride-to-be. The recital is in the form of a single speech of twenty minutes' duration, punctuated only by one or two exclamations from the girl. In it he re-

lates how, as a boy of twenty, he stole a few hundred francs to buy necessities for his first wife during the illness from which she died. He was found out and discharged by his employer. He then was compelled to resort to manual labor as a stevedore, but little by little he made restitution until the obligation was paid. If entirely sentimental, the confession is a story of moving pathos, and the simple eloquence with which Mr. Mason tells it makes it appeal powerfully to the sympathies of his audience. No other actor, probably, could hold attention so completely with such slender aids from a dramatist.

Of course *Merital* finds consolation in the devotion of his young bride. He



Photograph by White, New York.
Myrtle Tannehill as *Josie Richards* and George M. Cohan as *Jackson Jones*, in "Broadway Jones."



W. G. Kobb as *Hugh Menzies*; Adah Barton as *Mrs. Baikie*; Agnes Bartholomew as *Loesie Ingle*; Carl Lyle as *Mattha Ingles*; and Helen Baird as *Flora McGill*, in *A Scrape O' the Pen*.

determines to retire from political life and bend his whole effort to her happiness. Thus does he bring relief to his conscience and joy into his own existence.

The three leading rôles of *Renée*, *Merital* and *Frepeau* are about all that score dramatically in M. Bernstein's play. I have already mentioned the performances of the first two, so all that remains is to observe that Mr. Sidney Herbert gives definite characterization and considerable force to the dishonest and traitorous editor, *Frepeau*. The other four parts, as frequently happens in the lesser rôles of this French writer's melodramas, are not much more than lay figures.

ONE of these days, and not very far distant either, we will have to reckon seriously with Mr. George M. Cohan. A playwright who can turn out so good a farce as "Get-Rich-Quick Wallingford," and follow it up immediately with "Broadway Jones," is not to be taken lightly even though he himself persists in a humorous view of life. And when it is further considered that Mr. Cohan not only wrote and produced "Broadway Jones," but is also acting its leading character, one realizes he is confronted by a rare kind of versatility that some day may blossom into positive genius.

"Broadway Jones," in its shrewd observation of human nature, in the unflagging humor of its incidents and dialogue, and in the capital legitimate performance of its hero, is by far the best thing that the prolific scion of the tribe of Cohan has done yet. I might without much exaggeration add that it is the best native farce turned out in the last three seasons. This, too,



Photograph by White, New York.
Copyright, 1912, by Charles Frohman.
Martha Hedman as *Renée De Rould*, and John Mason
as *Alexandre Merital*, in "The Attack."



Photograph by White, New York. Copyright, 1912, by Charles Frohman.
 Martha Hedman as *Kenec De Koudt*; John Mason as *Alexandre Meritid*; and Eva Dennison as *Georgette Meritid*, in "The Attack."

Harry Fairleigh as
Captain Denton, and
Olive Ulrich as *Beatrice*,
in "My Best Girl."

Photograph by White,
New York.



despite "Baby Mine," "Officer 666" and divers other light plays that have earned fortunes for their lucky authors. It is fairly saturated with the triple essence of the peculiar atmosphere of Broadway—that atmosphere which can be breathed around the clock from the doorstep of Mr. Cohan's own theatre.

"Broadway," otherwise *Jackson Jones*, having inherited a fortune from his father, the most eminent citizen of Jonesville, Conn., and head of the *Jones* Chewing Gum Plant, comes to New York and so industriously puts the money back in circulation along the famous white-lighted highway that at the end of two years he finds himself penniless and sixty thousand dollars in debt.

As a final splurge, he gives an expensive dinner to his boon friends during which, as a last port in the financial

storm, he proposes matrimony to a rich and superannuated widow. Then he goes home to confess to his friend, *Bob Wallace*, that he is "broke,"—down and out.

This scene of the prodigal's home-coming to the luxuries which the sheriff will soon seize, and his account of his pyrotechnical career to *Wallace*, is the best bit of writing and acting that Mr. Cohan has done. But next morning "*Broadway's*" depression suddenly turns to exultation when a lawyer appears bringing the glad news that his uncle has just died and has bequeathed to him a fortune represented in the chewing gum plant which is larger than the one he has dissipated. "What will I do?" he exclaims to his friend's question. "Why, the first thing I'll do will be to buy Brooklyn and close it up!"

"*Broadway*" nevertheless leaves Brooklyn open, unbought and unmolested. The

arrival of an agent of the Chewing Gum Trust, who proposes to purchase the *Jones* plant for one million, two hundred thousand dollars, sends his thoughts in another direction and he leaves post haste for Jonesville to arrange the sale. Once in his native town, however, other considerations enter. The "luxuries" of the village hotel do not impress him greatly, nor does the lemonade in which old *Mrs. Spotswood* puts one drop of whisky—and not a drop more—not wishing to lure "*Broadway*" into the evil path of intemperance. But *Josie Richards*, the confidential secretary at the plant, touches him in a tender spot. When she smiles on him and describes how his great-grandfather founded the village, how his grandfather established the chewing gum plant, how his father developed the business, and how the three hundred employees—and she—are looking to the new owner to carry forward the family traditions, he is ready to pause and listen. *Josie*, you see, is such a dear, competent young thing, and she has such nice eyes! It may have been those eyes, even more than the *Jones* family traditions, that caused "*Broadway*" to heed his friend *Bob's* advice that the plant is worth almost double what the Trust agent has offered for it.

Anyway, there is now no such thing as escape from the snare set by *Josie's* eyes. He even defies the vindictive widow back in New York, who believes she has him fast in her clutches. When the Trust magnates appear on the scene, he turns a deaf ear to their threats to ruin him. He

decides, in short, to become a magnate himself and beat the Trust at its own game.

Then comes an hilarious celebration at the factory. "*Broadway*" delivers an address to his workmen and reviews the torchlight procession. He is keen to make the *Jones* Chewing Gum Plant mightier than it has ever been before—that is, if



Photograph by White, New York.
Bessie Bell as *Grace Carr* and John Hendricks as *The Colonel*
in "*My Best Girl*."

Josie will help him. In the office? Of course not! In the beautiful house on the finest street in the village, which "*Broadway*" will build for her if only she will discard the name of *Richards* for *Jones*!

Almost every species of the rural village denizen is humorously or satirically pictured in the play, and these are amusingly thrown in contrast with the city types. Such characters as *Josie*, *Judge Spotwood*, his good hearted wife and his coy daughter, are very well drawn, and there is no little humor in the *Judge's* fat son, *Sam*, who thinks he looks like Napoleon Bonaparte and is taking banjo lessons because he wants to become a great musical genius. In these rôles Myrtle Tannehill, Mr. and Mrs. Jerry J. Cohan, Mary Murphy and Russell Pincus, respectively, are capital.

The assured popularity of "*Broadway Jones*" has caused Mr. Cohan to pack his dancing shoes in his trunk for good and all. There are some who may regret it, but I for one will go so far as to hope that he will now lose the trunk.

GRAHAM MOFFAT, who pulled the strings of his Scotch characters so delightfully in the inimitable "*Bunty*," is also the author of "*A Scrape O' The Pen*." This new play of the land of the thistle and heather, though not less true to the life with which it deals, is of much soberer interest than its amusing predecessor. The same expedient of representing its characters in the surroundings and costumes of half a century ago is employed, and thus the atmosphere of the piece is equally novel and quaint.

The people are inhabitants of the rural village of Minniehive, where the family and friends of old *Mattha* and *Leezie Inglis*, having just enjoyed the exciting diversions of a wedding and a funeral, are preparing to celebrate the dawning of the New Year. In this way are introduced such amusing episodes as preparing *Beenie Scott* for her marriage to *Geordie Pow*, and the visit of her discarded sweetheart, *Peter Dalkeith*, a former inhabitant of the village, who, after he found himself jilted by the fickle *Beenie*, moved to Edinburgh, where he made such business-like use of his grief that he became a professional mourner at funerals—"the best paid

mourner in all Scotland," as he boasts.

A surprise awaits old *Mattha* and *Leezie* just as the New Year's bells ring out. The youngest member of their scattered progeny, *Alec*, years before had run away from home in disgrace. Not only had he secretly wedded *Jean Lowther*, a servant in the family, by the Scottish ceremony of exchanging mutual written contracts, but he had basely deceived a girl of the neighborhood whose child, after the scamp's disappearance, was adopted by old *Mattha* and his wife. *Jean* afterwards destroyed her marriage contract and wedded an honest farmer, *Hugh Menzies*, with whom she is now living in happiness and fancied security, for she believes *Alec* will never return.

The contract which *Jean* gave to *Alec* turns up unluckily in the possession of an English visitor in the village, who found it in Africa where *Alec* lost it. Even more unluckily, *Alec*, now prosperous and reformed, puts in an appearance soon after to claim his wife. Thus *Jean* finds she has two husbands. *Alec* is not at first disposed to give up his claim on her, but the sight of his illegitimate child softens his heart, and after a scene with his old parents, in which tears are mingled with smiles, so capitally does Mr. Moffat bring out the contradictions of Scotch character, he decides to destroy the tell-tale "scrape o' the pen." Thus good *Hugh Menzies* is left none the wiser of the calamity he has barely escaped.

This, of course, is not a very ingenious tale, but it does not follow that the play itself, which abounds in illustrations of Lowland idiosyncrasies, is not both novel and interesting. And the dour Scotch villagers, with their petty hypocrisies and meannesses, are all delightfully portrayed, especially by Carl Lyle and Agnes Bartholomew as the old pair that find so much trouble in guiding their unruly flock along the path of righteousness to the final haven of peace in which the play leaves them. Such characters as *Flora McGlip*, the servant, by Helen Baird, the somber and bibulous *Peter Dalkeith* by Edward Chester, *Geordie Pow* by J. Crichton Russell, *Jean Lowther* by Lila Barclay, *Beenie Scott* by Helen Mac Gregor, and honest *Hugh Menzies* by W. G. Robb, like the people

in "Bunty," seem to have just stepped out of real life, so freshly are they drawn.

THE speed developed by the new musical comedies became so swift at the very outset of this season that all but the best of our home composers and librettists have found much difficulty in keeping up with the pace. While the great majority of the successes have fallen to imported productions, there is some satisfaction in knowing that all the good melodies are not incubated on the banks of the Danube and that all the diverting stories are not hatched in the minds of foreign humorists. "My Best Girl," for instance, written by Mr. Rennold Wolf and Mr. Channing Pollock, and composed by Mr. Augustus Barratt, has shown itself quite able to take care of itself in the thoroughbred class.

Much of the popularity of this new native piece is due, no doubt, to the clever performance of Clifton Crawford, who has at last attained the altitude of a star, and to the exceptionally good company that surrounds him. Credit is also due to Mr. Crawford for originating some of the patter songs which his audiences never fail to demand over and over again. But no amount of talent or versatility in a comedian is able to overcome the handicap of a bad libretto, and this is where the work of Messrs. Wolf and Pollock shows its value. They have written a good, consistent story, and Mr. Crawford, who has not yet had time to develop the perversities of some of the older musical comedy stars, is sensible enough to stick closely to it.

Mr. Crawford impersonates the usual young spendthrift of musical comedy lore. He is *Richard Vanderfleet*, a rich, gay blade who, during a round of the all-night restaurants on Broadway, gets into a quarrel and in his befuddled state of mind imagines that he has killed somebody. When he comes to his senses next morning his only thought is to escape from the scene of his imagined crime, and the most feasible way that presents itself is to change names and identities with his chauffeur and send him out of the country.

It happens, however, that *Sam Brown*, the chauffeur, is a deserter from the army

who has already been located by the pursuing government officials. *Vanderfleet* therefore finds himself out of the frying pan and into the fire, for he is promptly arrested and sent to Governor's Island, where, to make matters still worse, the commandant is the father of the girl to whom he is engaged.

Before the arrest, however, another complication has occurred. In looking over the motor car, *Vanderfleet* has found a beautiful girl tucked away in the limousine. She explains that she crept in to get out of the rain while the car was standing beside the Broadway curb, and, being homeless and exhausted, had fallen fast asleep. The attractiveness of this waif quite takes *Vanderfleet's* mind off his sweetheart and reconciles him to her fickleness—which he detects while doing odd jobs as a prisoner around the reservation down the bay. The trials he endures at the hands of his superiors keep the entire last half of the piece moving merrily. In the end *Vanderfleet* is quite content to give up his *fiancée* to a rival lieutenant in order to open the way for his engagement to the pearl whom he has picked out of Broadway's unending stream of humanity.

Many will champion this lively piece for the reason that there is not a suggestive line or a phrase of double or doubtful meaning throughout it. Others, calloused to the petty vulgarities of musical shows, will like it best because of its songs. No more humorous lyric has been written since Mr. George Ade's "The Cold Gray Dawn" than "If The Morning After Were The Night Before," which Mr. Crawford sings. And this is only one of a dozen good songs which include "I Do Like Your Eyes," "I'm Smiling At The Moon That Smiles At You," "The Missionary Maids," "The Regular Army Man" and "Come, Take A Dance With Me."

Mr. Barratt's score betrays a too great fondness, or, perhaps, a too keen memory, for the melodies of Sir Arthur Sullivan. This borrowing among composers, however, is so common that it cannot be resented with any very great seriousness. They even do it in Vienna, where music, nowadays, is manufactured in strips by machinery and bought by the yard.